

A meeting of Croydon Parish Council was held on Wednesday 17 October 2018 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.

Apologies: Mr Ralph (IG) - sent a report

Present: Ms Newland, Mr Sole, Mr Barnes, Mr Brown, Mrs Slator, Mr Wenman, Cllr Williams (briefly), Cllr Kindersley (briefly), the Clerk and 6 members of the public.

Minutes: of the September meeting were agreed and signed.

Declarations of Interest: None received

Members' Interests Forms: All now received.

Matters Arising and Village Issues:

Implementation Group:

1) Hillson possible housing development. No further news since your last meeting. Last news was about a month ago and was that Hillson remained optimistic that agreement with the landowners would be forthcoming and proposals could then begin to be discussed.

2) Parish Website. The strategy is to get the existing website functioning to the extent that it is on air, editable (ie new information can be uploaded) and hosted under the auspices of the PC; once this has been achieved, if necessary, thought can turn to a spec for a new website - see software problem below. George Ralph has been in dialogue with Garth and thus far there is partial success on the first part of the strategy. The website is back on air (for the second time). Hosting has been successfully moved from Garth's own provider to EcoHost for a small monthly fee (less than £2). Editing is not yet possible because the software previously used was Garth's own copy (it comes with a user licence) but it is no longer available to buy so George is currently investigating an alternative workaround. George is happy to continue to work gratis for the benefit of the community at least for the first part of the strategy.

3) There will be an Autumn village clear up day which may possibly take place before the next PC meeting. As before this must be under the auspices of the PC (for insurance purposes) so please can it be minuted that the PC wishes for there to be an Autumn clear up day.

Council Vacancy: No interest yet.

First Aid Course: The Tuesday Group would like to offer First Aid training at one of their meetings. Mrs Slator has located a trainer who is willing to come out to the village evening to teach CPR. This was felt to be a better option than a defibrillator, as the village is so spread out. Mrs Slator has applied for Solar Farm funding, as below.

Tuesday Group Events: 6th November - the men from Croydon who are commemorated on the war memorial - 7.30pm 4th December - CPR training - **starts at 7.00pm**

Autumn Clear-up: The Implementation Group is holding an Autumn Village Clear-up day (Date TBC) under the auspices of the Parish Council.

South Cambs District Cllr Williams gave a verbal report.

Wimpole Hall Multi Use Trail: This has received planning approval although there were a lot of objections from local residents. There is to be a traffic consultation with Wimpole Hall and Highways, and it is believed that car parking at the Hall may be free. Following this consultation, any traffic management alterations in Arrington that Highways feel are necessary will be funded by the National Trust. There is a possibility that a volunteer Ranger scheme could be introduced along with improved signage to prevent the parking that is currently afflicting Church Lane

Gliding Club: This application is likely to go to the planning Committee, of which Cllr Williams is a member.

Wash and Squash: There is still too many contaminated containers coming through for recycling, and this prevents their effective use.

Universal Credits: The scheme was rolled out in this area today (17th October). If anyone known to you is struggling with these, please let Cllr Williams know.

As Councillor Williams had another meeting to attend that evening, she was thanked by the Chair for attending and gave her apologies for having to leave so quickly.

District Cllr Williams' written report to the meeting (already circulated to Councillors):-

The Local Plan: At the last full council meeting at SCDC, I was pleased to be able to vote for our Local Plan. Now that we have the Local Plan adopted I hope to see the end of speculative development in our district and more control for local residents. I am extremely pleased that our green belt is protected once more. I believe the adoption of this Local Plan to be a huge step forward for our district and my thanks go to all involved, officers and councillors both past and present in what has been an epic challenge.

Planning: John Koch, team west leader in the SCDC planning department, and Uzma Ali from the affordable housing team came to The Mordens ward on Tuesday 9th October at Hatley Village Hall, there were some great questions from the floor and helpful clarification from the officers who also took away feedback from residents and I felt it was a very successful evening. Wednesday 24th October there will be a second meeting at Guilden Morden Village Hall starting at 7.30pm. If anyone has specific questions in relation to planning department or affordable housing then please do send them to myself in advance, and my thanks go to all those who have helped in these meetings.

Universal Credit: Universal Credit is being rolled out on 17th October in South Cambs. I am confident that our SCDC officers will do all they can to support any residents affected but please do get in touch if I can be of any help.

South Cambs magazine: If any parishes have events they wish to go in the "What's on" Page of the magazine between December and February, please email me with:-

- Event Title:
- Date & Time:
- Venue:
- Full details including contact information:

Please note the deadline for the editor is Wednesday 17th October.

East/ West Rail: There was unanimous support at Full Council in September that all route options at this stage should be evaluated along with other aspirations for environment etc. The council will now write to the East West Railway Company, the Department of Transport, Network Rail and our MPs to expressing the views supported at the meeting.

Matters Arising (continued)

Council Vacancy: Still no interest.

Website and Webmaster: See IG report.

Emergency Plan Template: This is making progress. Risks involved could be flooding, surface water problems, severe storms, power outage, blocked ditches, bad weather, aircraft crash etc. The Reading Room is to be a central point for the Emergency Plan and Mrs Walters is happy to be a nurse for any emergency. Mrs Slator has obtained permission from others in the village to take responsibility, should the need arise. Mr Brown agreed to be the main contact. It was suggested that local farmers might have useful equipment that could be used. A telephone waterfall of contacts will be prepared so that if one person is not contactable, others will be. Mr Barnes offered to hold a copy of the numbers for this. To be continued at the November meeting.

CamBedRR: Croydon has still not been contacted regarding a meeting for the village. It is likely that the preferred route will be announced by 2019, following consultation. Mr Brown attended the meeting in Guilden Morden and was impressed with the presentation.

Lower Road Closure: Council has been notified that Lower Road will be closed at some time between September 2018 and March 2020 for surface dressing. Work has already been undertaken from the Tadlow junction to Wrestlingworth crossroads.

Police Surgery: The Clerk contacted our PCSO regarding information on the Police Surgeries. He feels that Croydon is too small to host its own surgery by suggested combining with Arrington, or attending the forthcoming surgery in Gamlingay. Clerk will discover the date of the surgery and publicise it.

Correspondence:

Local Development Plan: The Local Plan has finally been given approval. Croydon's proposed development may now only be available as an exception site, as further housing is not required in the Local plan.

Parish Planning Forum: Clerk reported that she had attended a Parish Planning Forum with Mr Wheeler (the previous Chairman) and did not hear/learn anything more than that already reported to the meeting by the then District Councillor Bridget Smith. No interest from Councillors.

Electric Vehicle Charging Point: The village has been asked by CCC if there is any interest in an electric vehicle charging point. Mr Brown will follow this up, as he is considering adding them to his premises. Whether there would be enough use in the village is doubtful.

Aviva: Aviva Insurance offered funding for any projects that Council is considering undertaking. At present there is nothing that Council is doing to warrant applying for this.

Stronger for Longer: CCC is promoting "Stronger for Longer" - a balance/activity scheme designed to help the elderly (over 70s) stay fit and active for longer. As a popular Tai Ji class is already operating from the Reading Room in Croydon, it was not felt necessary to pursue this.

Notice Board: This has been refurbished and the doors have been repaired to prevent the glass falling out. Thank you.

Meeting: Clerk requested that the February meeting be rearranged either a week earlier or later, as she is only able to take holidays in line with school holidays. Council agreed to hold the February meeting on 13th instead of 20th, for which the Clerk thanked them.

Finance:

NSI: As all Councillors were present at the meeting the final signatures were obtained, and the documentation for the change of signatories will be sent off. NSI has also announced faster cheque clearance.

Bank Statement: The balance at the end of September 2018 is £6864 - 29. This includes the second instalment of the precept.

Solar Farm: Following two e-mails and a Signed For letter, Clerk was informed that the address to which the invoice was sent has been changed. It has now been forwarded, and Clerk is looking forward to receiving the fourth instalment for the Community Benefit Fund shortly. Clerk has created a nominal to illustrate the Community Benefit Fund expenditure. This will ultimately go onto the website and has already been circulated to Councillors.

On-Line VAT service: The new service is now operative. When the next claim is due to be made, Clerk will discover if her computer will handle the new programme!

County Cllr Kindersley arrived following attendance at another meeting, and gave a verbal report to the meeting.

Monitoring Officer: Fiona Macmillan has been appointed as the Monitoring Officer. This is an internal promotion.

Council Tax Exemption: Discussions have been taking place regarding the exemption of carers from paying Council Tax. This was decided against.

People's Vote: on Brexit - not supported.

Budget: This is currently being worked on, but it is nowhere near making the cuts required for the savings. Various things are being discussed but 65% of local authorities will fall off the financial cliff in 2-3 years' time. Cambridgeshire, Cornwall and Surry are just about on the edge of that cliff now, whilst Northamptonshire has already gone over. There is likely to be a £12m deficit next year - there is nothing left to cut. It is likely that local volunteers will be required to clean street signs, keep ditches clear and weedkill the pathways. This may extend as far as grasscutting.

Council Tax: Will possibly be increased by 2% for Adult Social Care. Could be up to 3% increase.

Green Bins: It is possible to have a second green bin - at a cost of £20-00 for the first year only, rising to £35-00 per annum thereafter.

Letter of Complaint: Regarding Mayor James Palmer has been signed by everyone who matters. The Mayor has "not been playing nicely". He has been asked to remedy this, and has done so.

Grant Funding: SCDC has £400,000 available.

Highways England: Is looking at the A428 route for the railway.

CamBedRR: Cllr Kindersley will remind the man in Arrington that he needs to contact Croydon about arranging a meeting for the presentation. East-West Rail will announce a "corridor" which will have several options within it. Requests for information via the Freedom of Information Act have all been denied, as apparently the information is "privileged".

Cllr Kindersley's written report to the meeting (already circulated to Councillors):-

County Council Budget: Growing demand for the County Council's services and reducing government funding means the gap between the money we receive and what we need to spend continues to grow. The County Council faces tremendous pressures – for example with a growing number of children in our care, currently around 700 at any one time. There has been a 17% growth in the number of people aged 65+ in the county in the last four years, and with increasing age there are greater complexities in the care needed.

Cambridgeshire is the fastest growing county in the UK. Our extra population means more demand on our infrastructure, yet we are the third worst funded shire county. This increased demand for services has seen our current budget gap leap to £5.2 million – with a predicted additional £20.7m to find in 2019/20.

Government funding to the County Council has fallen by £50m in the past four years, from £53m a year in 2014/5 to just £3m this year. This sum is set to go negative next year – meaning we will have to send £7m of Cambridgeshire tax payer's money back to government to spend elsewhere in the UK. Cambridgeshire was the only Combined Authority area last year not to be given a business rate retention pilot project – costing the council an estimated £8m. Steps to reduce spend include looking at all planned spending, considering further reductions or postponements; considering all external contracts due to come up for renegotiation and freezing all non-essential vacancies.

Why are we telling you this? Because the services you receive from the County are being impacted. Recent concerns about the Stratton school bus service, for example, highlighted that the cheapest tender is – from now on in the County's eye – the best. Likewise potholes will be deeper and more dangerous before they are fixed – and the list continues... Most recently Council staff are being forced to take 3 days unpaid leave between Christmas and New Year – saving £880k.

If the County Council had taken the council tax increases permitted by Government it would have an extra £26 million revenue this year. The administration created a lot of the current crisis by saying repeatedly it could do more with less. Going forward, the administration plans to resume council tax freezes for three years, starting in 2020. It concedes that this is due to a perceived advantage in local elections, even though council tax freeze results in further elimination of public services. Will we get there 'tho? The Leader of the Council openly indicates his expectation that Cambridgeshire will go the way of Northamptonshire's bankruptcy in two years' time.

Parliamentary Constituencies: The Boundary Commission for England has now published final recommendations for changes to parliamentary constituency boundaries which you can see at <https://www.bce2018.org.uk/> The Mordens ward is proposed to be split between the South Cambridgeshire Constituency and the Letchworth & Royston Constituency. Melbourn and Bassingbourn wards are both fully within the Letchworth & Royston Constituency.

The final recommendations will need to be passed by parliament. If and when they are passed, they will take effect at the next parliamentary election. Currently this is scheduled to take place in 2022. If, for whatever reason, parliament does not pass these changes, the current constituency boundaries will remain in place.

Waterbeach Waste Incinerator/Barrington Quarry: The planning application to build a giant waste incinerator at Waterbeach in which all our rubbish could be burnt for heat and electricity generation came to the County Council's Planning Committee where it was refused contrary to the Officer's recommendation. The impact on the landscape, the listed buildings at Denny Abbey and the immediate neighbours were felt to outweigh the benefits of the application. The Committee has also met to discuss the proposal that the restoration of the quarry at Barrington be extended for up to 15 years. Neighbours and the Parish expressed concerns about the trains being used and the application was deferred for more information. The subsequent meeting saw significant concessions by Cemex to allay neighbour concerns and this has now been approved.

Road Updates: The flooding across Station Road Steeple Morden between the A505 and the Station was particularly bad this year. Although first reported in April the County Council has now advised works will be undertaken over the next 12 weeks – weather permitting. Concerns have also been

raised by Gamlingay residents with regard to blocked gullies. These should now all have been cleared - please get in touch if you are aware of any that remain blocked. Haslingfield Road Barrington will be shut on either December 20th or 21st for the demolition of the Cement Works Chimney - again weather dependent – this promises to be quite the spectacle.

Gamlingay Village Primary: The rebuild continues apace, and the completion date for the school is October 19th and we are on track for handover of the site. There is a section of roof Coulsons sub-contractors need to finish which is likely to run over but this will not affect the school's occupation. The children will occupy the site from January 2019. We now await further information from Cambridgeshire CC about the future of the First School site and how it will be used to accommodate several preschool settings.

Could you be a Teacher? As you may know we are facing a teacher shortage in Cambridgeshire. The County has organised an Initial Teacher Training provider event to make people more aware of all the options open to them. Please help us spread the word about the Getting into Teaching event at Anglia Ruskin University on Monday 19th November 2018, 6pm-8pm. There will be a range of local providers attending offering all phases and routes such as school centred places, PGCEs, B.Ed or internships.

To book a place for the event, please follow this link <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/getting-into-teaching-information-event-tickets-47983942263>

Gamlingay - Potton Cycleway: The Parish Council and Sebastian met with a number of representatives of organisations in Central Beds who are keen to expand cycle networks locally. The Parish has some S106 funding which would take a cycleway potentially to the county border on Potton Road past the Farm Shop. This road is fast and dangerous so we are now exploring if the old railway line would be suitable with diversions at both the Gamlingay and Potton end.

£400,000 grant pot launched to help communities: Voluntary and community groups are being asked to step forward and bid for a share of over £400,000 of grant funding to make sure vital services are delivered in South Cambridgeshire villages.

The three-year funding deal by South Cambridgeshire District Council will see money available for groups supporting communities on issues ranging from community transport and homelessness to living independently and support for people for upcoming national changes to benefits.

The areas of work service support grant funding is available include housing options advice and services preventing and relieving homelessness, community transport, specialist and general welfare advice, Independent living and fit to learn as well as support for parishes and communities. Full details of the service support grants available along with application forms can be found by visiting <http://www.scambs.gov.uk/community/grants/service-support-grants/>

Gamlingay Village Design Statement: Many years ago now Gamlingay residents developed a Village Design Statement which helped ensure that planning applications in the Parish were appropriate and well considered. We are delighted that Gamlingay is now one of 8 South Cambs villages to have been awarded funding from the Design Quality Fund via South Cambs to undertake a new Village Design Statement. Congratulations to the Parish Council clerks and councillors who worked very hard to achieve this.

The statement will show how buildings, streets, spaces, landscape and materials come together to create areas with distinctive identity and character. New development will have to be responsive to the character of the Parish and enhance it. It will help Gamlingay residents to express what is important to you about the visual character of the village, provide clarity for developers on design issues, and enable Council planners to push for high quality design.

Proposed changes to some bin collection arrangements: Changes to some aspects of bin collections in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire are being proposed to streamline the service. Now that we have a shared service they need to be streamlined. Most of the changes affect Cambridge City only but the one proposed change for South Cambs residents is the introduction of a charge for those who want more than one green bin, which Cambridge City residents already pay. The first green bin will remain free. 95% of Councils that offer a garden waste service already charge for additional green bins, including Cambridge City Council. It will be £35 pa but reduced to £20 for the first year. The scheme would officially begin in April 2019 with residents able to sign-up from early next year.

Bad Weather and your Electric Supply: Autumn is now upon us and no doubt we shall see some winter storms before too long. In case of bad weather you will be able to find regular updates on www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk and social media @UKPowerNetworks.

UK Power Networks provide extra help to customers on their Priority Service Register during a power cut. Households with older or disabled people, those with children under five, or where someone uses medical or mobility equipment that requires electricity as well as other reasons can join the register. You can find out more information about the Priority Service on: ukpowernetworks.co.uk/priority

Grays Rd Parking Places: You will have noticed that the contractor has now left the Robinson Court site and that all the houses are now complete and most of them have people living (hopefully very happily) in them. However, very frustratingly we still have no sign of the new parking bays in Grays Rd. Bridget has asked that it is prioritised.

We have been told that the landscape contractor has been instructed to remove a small tree because there is no alternative in such a confined space. We are hopeful that the larger tree will be able to be saved through a route defence barrier.

Land South of West Rd: We have been contacted by the developer who has acquired the Land South of West Rd which was granted planning permission in an appeal enquiry over a year ago. We are meeting with them to discuss their proposal for 29 houses. The parish council is also involved and will be organising a public meeting for residents to have their say.

A428 Busway Project: It looks like the Mayor (James Palmer) has changed his mind about allowing an off road busway to be built to link Cambourne with Cambridge City. Until a few weeks ago he had been vehemently promising that no busway would go through or near to the village of Coton. Rather surprisingly, we have now heard from residents that he had told them that at an informal meeting that he had changed his mind - before telling either the District Council or the Greater Cambridge Partnership, whose project any prospective busway is.

The Chair thanked Cllr Kindersley for attending and he left the meeting.

Parking on the Pavement: This was raised at the last meeting. Clerk has obtained information from the "Ask the Police" website. Unless specifically prohibited (with signs, road markings etc) it is permissible to park on the pavement as long as no obstruction to either pedestrians or homeowners occurs. If an obstruction does occur, a fixed penalty notice can be issued. It is an offence to drive on the pavement, unless you are accessing your property via a lowered kerb. Goods vehicles over 7.5 tonnes may not park on the pavement

Mr Wenman reported that the pub will eventually have a one way system for its patrons - projected date for this is spring/summer 2019.

A member of the public reported motor bikes using Lower Road as a race track. This has been happening for a long time, and the route is even advertised in various Motorcycle magazines.

Items for next agenda:

Speed sign

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 21 November 2018 in the Reading Room, starting at 7.30pm.

As there was no further business, the meeting closed at 9.04pm.

Signed

Date