

## **A meeting of Croydon Parish Council was held on Wednesday 16 October 2019 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.**

**Apologies:** Mr Brown - away, Cllr Williams - meeting in Ely, Cllr Kindersley sent his apologies by e-mail, and these were received after the meeting

**Present:** Mr Barnes, Mrs Slator, Ms Newland, Mr Wheeler, the Clerk and one member of public.

**Minutes:** of the September meeting were agreed and signed.

**Declarations of Interest:** None received.

### **Matters Arising and Village Issues:**

**Implementation Group:** The co-Chairs sent their apologies along with a short report to the meeting, and another member of the Group attended on their behalf.

There are a few items listed in the PC agenda where the IG has been active, these are as follows:

**Housing Needs Survey follow-up discussion:** The PC at its September meeting invited comments from the IG on the findings of the ACRE HNS. In response the IG has met and has exchanged drafts of a response paper which, in final form, is now offered for your meeting. We believe it is free standing so needs no further introductory comments here. *(If you would like to see a copy of the IG's letter to the Parish Council, please e-mail the Clerk and the letter will be sent to you.)*

**Website:** IG efforts have been focused on continuing to keep the current version ticking over while at the same time supporting the PC with its efforts to acquire a new website. A decision on a new provider is imminent and once this has been taken then efforts need to turn to establishing a small website team to keep the site updated and relevant. It is understood that Hatley have formed a Web Team to support their new website so contact with them to learn from their experience would seem to be a sensible near term step. Continued thanks is warranted to George Ralph for his efforts in keeping the current site up and running.

**Speedwatch:** As reported previously five volunteers have come forward but to date a coordinator has not stepped up. At the September PC meeting Councillor Heather Williams mentioned an upcoming Speedwatch briefing meeting and it is hoped that Croydon's volunteers will be able to attend, or be represented, as this may serve to get things off the ground. Is Councillor Williams able to confirm a date and location for this meeting, please?

**Village Litter Pick & Tidy-up:** The next event is scheduled for **Saturday 16th November** with the usual 10am start in the centre of the village. There will be the usual focus on litter picking and path clearing; what will be new is an effort to clear overgrowth away from road signs and other areas. If anyone has spotted particular problem areas then please inform either Elaine 207775 or Malcolm 208939. The usual PC insurance cover will be needed and help to publicise this effort would be very helpful - simply turn up with clearing tools, yellow vests will be provided and must be worn.

Clerk will make a poster to place into the village notice board. It is likely that the IG will send a Mailchimp reminder around the village.

**Housing Needs Survey:** After perusal of the IG's comments and a short discussion, it was resolved that Council would contact ACRE with a view to pursuing the possibility of an exception site to a conclusion, one way or another. Council also resolved that it would like to seek a Housing Association, possibly Hastoe, due to the longer term protection it offers to the affordable housing. Mrs Slator agreed to contact the relevant persons, as she has previously dealt with them.

**Website:** Mrs Slator has received the quotations she requested regarding the creation of a new village website. It was decided that the two most expensive quotations (circa £6k and £3k + VAT) would be discounted and the lower two quotations would remain, with a few further questions which the Council would like answered before a final decision is made. Mr Wheeler said that it is most important that the information on the website is kept up to date, so commitment will be needed from everyone involved.

**Clopton Village Site:** Clerk and Peter Gaskin from the County Council walked up to the Clopton site. Mr Gaskin made several useful suggestions. The interpretive sign was retrieved, has been cleaned up

and, pending permission from the site owner, can be reinstated. Clerk will contact the owner as instructed.

**Parish Planning Forum:** Clerk attended this on 25th September, on behalf of the Parish Council. Her report is below:-

**Non- Material Amendments:** When planning permission is granted, development must take place in accordance with the permission and conditions attached to it, and with any associated legal agreements. However, new issues may arise after planning permission has been granted, which require modification of the approved proposals. Where these modifications are fundamental or substantial, a new planning application under section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 will need to be submitted. Where less substantial changes are proposed, there are the following options for amending a proposal that has planning permission:

- Making a non-material amendment
- Amending the conditions attached to the planning permission, including seeking to make minor material amendments, i.e..position of windows, internal layout change, material details, landscaping.
- An NMA cannot be used to increase the size of the development.

Consultation on an NMA is the exception rather than the norm.

There is no statutory definition of 'non-material'. This is because it will be dependent on the context of the overall scheme -an amendment that is non-material in one context may be material in another. The local planning authority must be satisfied that the amendment sought is non-material in order to grant an application under [section 96A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#).

As an application for a non-material amendment is not an application for planning permission, the normal provisions relating to notification do not apply. Instead, before the application is made, the applicant must notify anyone who is an owner of the land which would be affected by the non-material amendment or, where the land comprises an agricultural holding, the tenant of that holding. The applicant must also record who has been notified on the application form. Anyone notified must be told where the application can be viewed, and that they have 14 days to make representations to the local planning authority. There is no prescribed form for this and no requirement for an ownership certificate or an agricultural holdings certificate to be provided. These requirements are set out in [article 10 of the Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#).

The procedure cannot be used to make non-material amendments to listed building consents. It only applies to planning permissions.

#### **Questions from the floor:-**

Q If a PC objected to an application and the Planners subsequently passed it, then shouldn't they be consulted?

A The Planners would look at the PC's previous objections before coming to a decision.

Q When would a PC be consulted?

A If a lot of objections other than the PC's were received, then the PC would be notified.

Q Will the Planners still be sending out paper copies of plans? Looking at an A1 plan on a piece of A4 paper does not make a decision easy for Councillors!

A SCDC Is trying to move away from paper plans in order to save money, paper and time printing. It is hoped that Councillors will be able to look at the plans on their phones/laptops/iPads etc.

One of the gentlemen present suggested that as the printing was costing so much, maybe SCDC should give each PC £1000 so that they could put a projector into their meeting place and project the plans onto a screen in the meeting place. The Chair thought this was a good idea, but said that if a PC wanted to do this then it should precept for the money involved. The gentleman that I sat next to, a Councillor from West Wickham, said that his village hall had just had a deal with BT for broadband free for the next 3

years, and then it would have to be paid for. Should Council consider pursuing this, or contact Connecting Cambridgeshire?

**The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** (the 'levy') is a tool for councils in England and Wales to help deliver the things needed to support the development of the area.

The levy states that a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development

**Current position;** Due to delays in the examination of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan the examination of the draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule has been unable to take place. A decision was made by Cabinet on 16 November 2017 to withdraw the draft CIL Charging Schedule with a view to update its evidence base and re-consult on a revised CIL strategy in 2018.

#### **Benefits**

- CIL will provide land owners and developers with greater certainty as to the level of contributions payable from their development
- CIL receipts can be spent in a more flexible way than planning obligations
- CIL will generate greater income for us to facilitate the provision of local and strategic infrastructure
- CIL is non-negotiable
- CIL ensures greater transparency to local people as we will have to publish details of how CIL has been spent
- A proportion of CIL receipts are to be shared with the local community

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/4775/parish-council-cil-updatedoc.pdf>

Once CIL is adopted all planning permissions approved from that date will be liable for it. Until then we will continue to use Section 106 agreements to secure money from development. Section 106 monies secured by agreement, up to the point that we introduce CIL, will still need to be honoured, meaning there will be a period of many years where the two systems are working together.

**Shared Planning Services (with Cambridge City):** It was reported that this was all going smoothly and there were no problems. This caused a lot of laughter in the room! Since spring all 136 staff at SCDC have been consulted, resulting in a new structure and new job descriptions. It was admitted that the performance of the planning department was not as good as it could be, and the good news is that a new planner has been recruited, who has been in post for 2 weeks. He partners one of the long-standing planning officers.

**Listed Building Grants:** These were cut 4-5 years ago. Other grants are available through the Community Chest, but this is not for Listed Buildings.

**Recruitment:** SCDC is good at attracting graduates but is not good at keeping them. In order to progress, a graduate has to apply for another job within SCDC, and this is generally the point at which they leave. There does not seem to be any scope for promotion on the grounds of performance. Three post-graduates are being sponsored at present and the planning department does offer work experience, but admitted that this does take up a lot of an officer's time.

It was reported that Terraquest has been retained in order to ease the load on the planners. It was made clear that they will supplement the planning process (validation, assessment and straightforward applications), and all planning decisions will remain with the District Council. Parish Councils should not notice any change or experience any difficulties. There is also a lot of policy and strategy work (for the next 25 years) that is on-going, which takes up a lot of the planners' time.

Below is a cut and paste from Terraquest's website.

" TerraQuest delivers Planning Application and Enforcement services to Local Authorities either via long term contracts or short term on demand services. Through a working partnership with the Local Authority TerraQuest supplies an adaptable service which is individually tailored to the client's needs. The service

is designed to reduce time and cost taken to submit, process and approve Planning Applications while enhancing the applicant's experience."

The department is currently about to begin another round of recruitment and has developed a website showing all the jobs available at SCDC.

**Questions from the floor:-**

Q Should Parish Councils be concerned about a lack of local knowledge by Terraquest?

A No, because all decisions will still be made by SCDC planners.

The gentleman went on to state that Swavesey has by-ways on which there is secluded housing, and these have not had any finings put on them for over 4 years. The Chair stated that she would look into this.

Q Will the planning letters still have a contact on them, and would it be a Terraquest employee or a SC employee?

A There will be a contact on the letters - it may be either but should not make any difference.

**Local Plan Update**

This is just entering the first of the 4 to 5 year process of preparing a joint Local Plan. Issues and options are being prepared for discussion at a meeting next Tuesday (1st October). Then scrutiny meetings will take place throughout October and November, and the consultation is planned to go out for public consultation on 25th November for 10 weeks. Lessons learned from the past have been considered in the preparation of the document. There have been 8 Stakeholder meetings held this year - subjects included climate change, biodiversity, sustainability, infrastructure etc. At the moment, evidence is being prepared to inform the Plan - should growth take place in Cambridge, in villages or in transport corridors. The new Local Plan website will have a lot of digital capability.

**Questions from the floor:-**

Q Will the Local Plan review the village frameworks? Some villages do not want 100 houses, but would prefer gentle and progressive growth.

A SCDC has not made a decision on this yet.

**Development Management and Improvement Plan**

The process of planning is being streamlined, with a lot of technical workshops particularly looking at engagement with customers and making the planning process better. Reviewing the planning conditions (conservation etc) through working with specialists, as the conditions have not been updated for several years.

The new planning website will be much improved. A search may be saved - if a line is drawn around an area on the map, any activity within that area will be notified by e-mail.

**Questions from the floor:-**

Q Will plans be sent out sooner? Complainant stated that his PC recently received plans date stamped as received on 20th of the month on 10th of the following month. After the statutory period required for calling a meeting, the Councillors were left with 2 days in which to discuss and return the response.

A Apologies - using Terraquest should help considerably with this.

Q Cambourne Town Councillors identified lots of problem throughout the planning process last year, which resulted in an unwelcome application being passed. No locals were consulted, the applicant followed officers' advice and applied. The Cambourne Council wanted it taken to Committee - this was not done and the application was passed. More amendments were made and these were also passed. Will local opinion still be considered?

A Apologies for this chain of events - the Chair will look into it.

The next meeting will be in March 2020 - date to be advised.

**Telephone Equipment in Clopton Close:** Council received several comments regarding the proposed use of the telephone kiosk to house a defibrillator. Pending confirmation that the installation of a

defibrillator will be permitted, Council will be adopting the kiosk for this use. Clerk said that she has an e-mail indicating the use is permitted, recommending the make preferred as it meets regulations.

**Community E-bike service:** Information received on an e-bike project. Councils may purchase cabinets in which to store the e-bikes, which are much greener to use than a vehicle, and the bikes may be used for journeys to work etc. Council felt that for Croydon, the cost of the project was prohibitive and charging the bikes might be a problem.

**Connecting Cambridgeshire:** Clerk has contacted Connecting Cambridgeshire twice and has not received a response. The Chair of the Reading Room sent an e-mail regarding funding for broadband through ACRE. Clerk has made enquiries and Croydon is "on the list" for when decisions on funding are made.

**Remembrance Sunday:** Clerk had hoped to report on when the wreath laying will take place in Croydon on 10th November, so that Councillors could attend if available. Unfortunately, our Rector is unwell, so further details will be sent round as soon as an approximate time is established.

### **District Councillor's Report for The Mordens Ward SCDC**

**Premature and Neonatal Leave Policy:** When preparing my first motion for Full council I wanted it to be memorable, I therefore chose something of great personal significance. I proposed a motion that SCDC should establish a Premature and Neonatal Leave Policy.

Becoming a parent is a life changing event - for many a time of great joy and excitement, however for parents like myself who have premature babies it can be a time of fear, anxiety, and helplessness. While pregnant you prepare for bringing your baby home, but nothing can prepare you for the day you come home without your baby, having never held them. When the time does come to bring your bundle of joy home, you share the excitement and elation that other parents feel - but life is still not quite the same. The extra support a NICU/SCBU baby requires does not end when they leave hospital. They are more prone to infection and some babies require specialist care at home, so it is crucial that parents have enough leave not only to bond with their babies, but to provide this additional medical care too.

All of this is on top of additional financial pressures with a premature baby costing an extra circa £2,000 and difficult decisions about when partners should return to work, which is why it is so important for mothers like me to speak out, and for employers like the Council to support employees. It is the policy that we hope is never needed, but it will give some certainty at a time when there is very little. Progress is only made when parents like me speak out, and others listen, so I thank all councillors and officers who have supported this motion and brought it to reality.

**Community Chest Grants:** As of the 1<sup>st</sup> October the second tranche of monies are available for the Community Chest Grants. There has been some change in criteria where the grants advisory committee have the ability to supersede the clause that excludes Parish councils of 160 more electors in the case where there are separate settlements within a single parish or a parish that is within 10% of the threshold. While I still believe that a more appropriate criteria would be based on dwellings as opposed to electorate, I welcome that there are smaller parishes that the grant may now reach. Though 10%, i.e. 16 more electors, is a very small number and there are still many parishes that this could hinder.

**Auditing of SCDC Accounts:** As a member of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee I have been paying close attention to the situation as we are yet to see an audited set of financial statements for the 2018 year end let alone the subsequent March 2019 year end making the deadlines for auditing the 2020 accounts extremely tight and potentially unachievable. There have been several issues in the auditing of these financial statements referenced to the committee repetitively as resourcing issues both from the external auditors and from within the department at South Cambs. The previous years' accounts were externally audited and found to be sound, with any previous errors being found as non-material. This means that there has been no financial mismanagement of funds but issues relating to the preparation of financial statements. While the resources of the council's external auditors are out of the council's controls, the internal resource issues there have been over the past year or so are. I and others have urged for the council to resource the department appropriately and if extra resources will be needed, as I expect, to close the 2020 accounts on time then that recruitment should start now. I hope these calls are listened to along with my concerns that as an audit committee the last financial position information we have been given is for March 2018.

#### **Councillor Allowances**

At September's Full Council meeting, Council debated the issue of the amount councillors will receive in allowances, which apply from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 in relation to Basic Allowance and Special

Responsibility Allowances to increase from 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019. The Basic allowance has increased by 2% (£98) as is the percentage increase that officers will receive. This I believed to be an acceptable proposal, however the arrangements in respect of Special Responsibility allowances (SRA) were not. There is an introduction of 9 new SRAs some of which are 4 figure sums and one being over £5,000. Other SRAs have been increased over 100% and members are able to receive not one SRA as has previously been the case but can now receive two SRAs. This means that as the Combined Authority executive board member is the council's Leader the amount received by the Leader of SCDC is now over £20,000 in comparison to the basic allowance of £5,010 and an increase of over 35%. One of the arguments for the increase was to make the role of being a councillor more assessable, if the substantial increase was to the basic allowance, I would have understood this logic but to increase the SRA's, in my opinion, means this logic is lost. With all of this in mind I voted against this proposal.

**Planning at SCDC:** The Administration have decided to bring in an external company to deal with planning procedures normally completed by officers at SCDC. We have been told that this is a temporary measure to relieve pressure within the department, an issue many have been raising for some time. Concerns have been raised in relation to this decision mainly due to the lack of information councillors have been given. At September's full council meeting there were motions calling for more transparency in the planning process including a clear audit trail of those contributing comments towards applications, being clear when an external company has been involved in an application, but these were voted down. Also requests for statistics such as average determination times and the number of applications outstanding to be published on the scamb's website was voted down.

**Onshore Wind:** There was a motion at full council to call for changes in the planning legislation and guidance around onshore wind applications. I have been very supportive of motions and projects that raise the issue of our environment, like others I consider it to be a key concern. However, I did vote against this motion and would like to explain why. Wind farms can currently be built in South Cambs like other parts of the country, but the current policies require it to be community led. If a community wished to bring forward a windfarm or wind turbine, then I believe they should be supported by the council, however to judge windfarms in the same light as other applications I believe to be wrong as it would mean that this could be forced onto a community against their will. I did not feel comfortable with the proposal and felt I would be doing residents a disservice by voting for something that potentially could make their voices less important on such a controversial issue.

**Fly-Tipping:** Fly-tipping has once again been an issue in The Mordens Ward along with other areas of the district. If I can remind all that it is possible to check that operators collecting rubbish are properly registered waste carriers, this can be done via the link below.

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/view/search-waste-carriers-brokers>

Below is the link to the full council agenda and mins which given the extent I have referenced the meeting felt it may be helpful.

<https://scamb.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=410&MId=7525&Ver=4>

Cllr Heather Williams

SCDC The Mordens Ward

### **County Councillor's Report - Cllr Kindersley**

**A505 in the Mordens & Litlington:** Our Hertfordshire County colleague Steve Jarvis writes: "There are now a set of "preferred options" which involve preventing right turns into the side roads as before, but with a new turn back facility for the people who want to turn towards Baldock from the Ashwell station turning. In my view this is not as good as a roundabout but the cost is much less so we are much more likely to actually get something done.

As previously stated first of these changes will be at the Litlington turning and we now know that this will be implemented next year, which is good news.

The less good news is that at present there are no dates for the other changes but the cost of what is now proposed for the Ashwell station turning means that there is a much better chance of getting it done before too much longer.

In the meantime there is to be an investigation of the potential for lowering the speed limit past the Ashwell station junction to 60mph. This will involve measuring the actual traffic speeds and then the "Speed management group", which consists of safety engineers and the police, considering the results. Finally there has been an investigation of traffic going the wrong way, which has revealed that on average one vehicle a day turns down the wrong side of the road from the Ashwell station turning. They

agree that this is a big problem and they are investigating why this happens and how to stop it. This will include monitoring the junction with cameras.

There have already been several attempts to prevent this by changing signs, etc. but clearly more needs to be done. It's good that this is now recognised. Once they have decided what will be effective it should be fairly done quickly.

**NHS Services in Cambridgeshire:** 'Difficult decisions' - The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group has launched what it's calling The Big Conversation - a public discussion about how it should continue buying health services for our area, against the reality that it is currently spending considerably more than it can afford. The consequences are important for all of us - do please have a look and respond.

<https://www.cambridgeshireandpeterboroughccg.nhs.uk>

**Drains & Gullies:** While it goes against logic, due to County Highways' slim maintenance budget, planned annual drainage and gully clearance no longer takes place and those drains that get cleared are done on a reactive basis, usually on the basis of someone having logged a blocked drain complaint on-line, here: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults/>

**East West Rail Northern Route Update:** In response to local questions, a CamBedRailRoad spokesman reports: "We were expecting a Preferred Route Announcement on the EastWest Railway by the Summer Recess. This has now passed, and the current turbulence both at Westminster and in relation to the now-doubtful HS2 would indicate not a lot of announcing about railways anytime soon. However, EWR have written to CamBedRailRoad telling us that our Northern Option (St Neots - Cambourne - Northstowe to Cambridge North) is being assessed following the end of the public consultation.

"We are seeking clarification on the timings of announcements and the detail of the assessment. This is important because communities are living with a cloud of doubt about the eventual routing which is blighting land, property and lives. We are also in discussion with a wide range of organisations about a possible joint approach to any future legal action and have engaged a well-known firm of solicitors to work with us. More about our work at [www.cambedrailroad.org](http://www.cambedrailroad.org)."

**Combined Authority Consultation on new Local Transport Plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough:** A reader writes: "What is the point of the Combined Authority? Even the County Council has pointed out that the Consultation on the new Local Transport Plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough doesn't recognise the national 2050 zero carbon target nor the county's own climate emergency nor district policies on this. There are no details under the strategic overviews, no implementation plans, no indication of ownership nor targets and no indication of financial or ongoing maintenance apportionment. Why is the CPCA public consultation so naff?"

Why, indeed.

**Fostering:** The County Council is trying very hard to dispel some myths around fostering, as we always need more foster families who are willing to help with the 600 or so children in care at any one time in Cambridgeshire. Fostering is a hugely rewarding role - have you ever thought about it?

In particular one myth is that foster carers do not receive any support with their work. However all of our foster carers receive a generous allowance as well as 24 hour access to support and training with an allocated fostering social worker who is the main point of contact.

In fact, the only requirements are that prospective carers are over 21 and have a spare bedroom! You can be single, married, in a civil partnership, in rented accommodation or retired.

**First School Site in Gamlingay :** There has been a certain amount of posting about this site on Facebook. Firstly - just to ensure that the conspiracy theorists find it harder to invent more stuff - both Sebastian (as County Councillor) and Bridget (as District Councillor) have very clear views about the future of the site which have been often put in the Gazette and raised at Parish Council. The plan is to maintain the site in 100% public use and in particular that any pre-schools that wish to - plus any new settings - move onto the site be enabled to do so. There would also be a new facility designed to be a centre of excellence for the education of primary-age students with autism who are enrolled at GVP.

Secondly - just again to make it absolutely crystal clear - neither of us would support the building of a single house on the site. Just no. Gamlingay has enough house building proposed for the next few years and the loss of this site to the community is unacceptable.

Regrettably the CCC team that deals with education sites with whom Sebastian had a meeting in March were not aware that there was a 25 year expiry clause on land subject to Compulsory Purchase. Therefore Crichel Downs rules do not apply (ie that CPO'd land must be offered back to the original

owner). Sadly this means that the one certain and absolute block to the development of the Playing Fields has been removed.

This is because while it was not in CCC's financial interest to develop the land (because it would have reverted to Merton College) CCC would have been unlikely to have pursued it. The results of a Freedom of Information request by a Gamlingay resident appear to have coincided with the revelations that indicate that the land and any profit from it now would remain to the benefit of CCC and therefore CCC is very likely to pursue this avenue.

Obviously this all means nothing if South Cambs reject the submission of the site as part of the Local Plan Call for Sites - and let us all pray that they do. Sadly we won't know for 18 months or so; and in the meantime the site remains unused despite the very keen local organisations who wish to use it for community benefit. Amazingly frustrating and not helped by the 'odd' views expressed by some on Facebook.

**Waterbeach New Town:** A legal agreement has been reached confirming £141 million worth of new services, facilities and transport upgrades that will come forward as part of the first 6,500 homes at a new town north of Waterbeach. Back in May, South Cambridgeshire District Council's Planning Committee gave the green light to Urban&Civic's outline plans to develop the former Waterbeach barracks site. This is the western half of the site that is allocated for a new town in the authority's Local Plan.

The developer's funding towards community services and facilities will see many upgrades and community facilities come forward at different stages of the development including:

At least 30% affordable housing, three primary schools, a secondary school and a special educational needs school, a health centre and many open spaces with outdoor pitches – to include sports areas, children's play space and allotments / community orchards and three sports pavilions. There will be a contribution towards a new leisure centre, including a swimming pool, three community centres and a community hub with library.

A total of almost £16 million worth of transport upgrades in and around the village of Waterbeach are also included as part of the Section 106 process. Bridget is aiming to ensure that any new large scale development are self-supporting and self-sustaining. Dormitory villages full of commuters are no longer an option and housing has to be built near to where people live, work, play and learn. That also means that development in existing villages must be no more than the villages can support unless developers are making significant contributions to upgrading village amenities to cope with extra people.

**Biodiversity & School Funding at South Cambs:** In July, the District Council passed two motions, both unanimously supported:

The first - which aims to double the area of rich wildlife habitats, tree cover and accessible green space in South Cambs - laid out measures including the development of a mandatory biodiversity net gain policy and directing developers to use the Developing Nature Toolkit to use in planning new developments, as well as identifying areas for tree planting for carbon sequestration, flood management, air quality improvement and other environmental services.

The second instructed the council to make representation to the Secretary of State for Education and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, calling for them to take action to reverse, in full, the real-terms cuts to per-pupil school budgets since 2015 – meaning schools in South Cambridgeshire would receive £3,837,946 additional funding in 2020 – and fix the historic underfunding of Cambridgeshire schools by putting in place genuinely fairer funding through the National Funding Formula. Though the District Council is not directly responsible for education, schools are an important part of the communities they represent and the funding pressure they are under is beginning to damage those communities.

**The Future!** We've just kicked-off the start of a very important process that will shape South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City for decades to come. It'll look at how we respond to climate change, increase biodiversity and green spaces, promote wellbeing and equality, deliver jobs, transport links, schools, health facilities, utilities and homes. This is our next Local Plan, which will be a combined plan for Greater Cambridge. We're determined to reach as many people as possible across the two Council areas, giving everyone the chance to have their say.

We're now at the stage where, together with Cambridge City Council, we've published a report that gives details of an upcoming "Issues and Options" consultation. Sounds dry but this consultation in November will give everyone in Greater Cambridge the chance to talk about the big issues that our next Local Plan needs to address.

We think the Local Plan is probably the most important document that most people have never heard of, because it touches so many aspects of our lives. Where we live, where we work, how we get to

work, the types of places our children and grandchildren will grow up in, where they will go to school and so much more. It'll also be a key tool in helping us to achieve our ambition of a zero carbon South Cambridgeshire by 2050. The plan will eventually include strong policies to make sure that new developments support this goal and also improve nature and the environment around the area. So, with all of that in mind, please look out for this "Issues and Options" consultation in November.

Staff in our Planning Service, which we share with Cambridge City Council, are working incredibly hard to make this process as easy as possible for you to take part in. We think the whole process is going to take around three years in total and there will be plenty of chances to have your say, so please take advantage of them. It's so important to us that local people help to develop and test this plan. We've already done more than ever before by holding some early workshops with parish councils, residents' associations, businesses, developer

**Brexit:** Generally we keep away from Brexit for all the obvious reasons. However, as Councillors we are increasingly being messaged by concerned residents with questions - most of which we cannot answer to any certain degree. The situation is also very fast moving.

However, we are concerned about the impact a No deal Brexit might have locally. Around South Cambs it is easy to think that most people have jobs in the high spec technical world – research, development and so on. We tend to forget that we are all lucky enough to live in a working countryside.

To that end we are alarmed about the impact a No Deal Brexit might have on our local farmers. The impact of leaving the EU on the farming and agricultural communities will be widespread and destructive. UK farmers are heavily reliant on funding from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). In 2014 alone, 175,700 UK farm businesses received €3.2 billion in direct payments. Under the CAP, the EU also funds development in rural communities.

Brexit will impact food supply and the availability of food in the UK. With delays at borders due to custom checks, the delivery of perishable goods will be limited. In the event of a no-deal Brexit, tariffs will be applied to agricultural goods that transit between the UK and EU. The MFN no-deal Brexit tariffs will increase the cost of importing and exporting agricultural products. These additional costs will be passed onto YOU, the consumer. The UK Trade Policy Observatory analysis concludes that prices will increase by 5.8% for meat, 8.1% for dairy, 4% for vegetables, 3.1% for fruit, 1.8% for bread and cereals and 1.5% for fish. This will impact the poorest in society the most, where 16% of household income is currently spent on food. A no-deal Brexit will mean more income will be spent on food.

This is an affluent part of Cambridgeshire - and yet villages such as Gamlingay have thriving foodbanks. We are profoundly concerned about the impact on families who are already struggling.

**Hare Coursing:** A resident asked for details of why so much effort is put in stopping hare coursing by the Police. Hare coursing is the pursuit of hares with greyhounds and other sighthounds, which chase the hare by sight and not by scent. Dogs are tested on their ability to run, overtake and turn a hare which will invariably always lead to the hare being caught and killed. It is considered a blood sport on which large amounts of money are gambled - often live filmed and broadcast abroad -China, Hong Kong and so on. It is a completely banned and unlawful activity in England, Wales and Scotland.

Hare coursing on land is primarily a seasonal issue affecting the rural communities of Cambridgeshire. It has a very serious impact on farmland and farmer's livelihoods- ruining crops and wrecking fencing and hedges - to say nothing of the impact on the hares, of course.

Persons involved in this type of offending travel some distance to commit offences primarily in 4x4 type vehicles to allow them to drive over fields to follow their dogs or evade capture by police. Offenders historically caught involved in this type of offending are very frequently linked to wider criminality. So an arrest often leads to further crime being cleared up.

**Safer Communities:** In her role on the Local Government Association Safer Communities Board Bridget has been hearing from the Commission which is about to report on Modern Day Slavery. This is not something which happens elsewhere - it is happening on all our doorsteps and is often difficult to recognise. Even more concerning is to hear that some people in prison are actually victims of slavery rather than perpetrators of crime. An example would be young people arrested for County Lines drug running who are actually being controlled through fear and coercion by organised crime gangs. The Commission will be demanding better support for victims, more robust punishment of the criminals and improved means of identifying modern day slavery. In South Cambs we know to keep a close eye on agricultural work gangs, tarmacking enterprises and car washes. Bridget was told that if you are paying under £6.50 for your car to be washed it is unlikely that people are receiving the minimum wage. If you have any concerns it is vital that you report it. Here is the way to do it:

Telephone call 101 - [www.cambs.police.uk/report](http://www.cambs.police.uk/report) - Textphone 18001 101 or anonymous reporting  
Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111

**Rivers and Water in South Cambs:** The conservation officer at the Wildlife Trust has advised communities south of Cambridge that the River Granta at Clerk's Piece Stapleford has stopped flowing. All the brown trout in this reach of river have died alongside stickleback, bullhead and stone loach. Whilst we are experiencing a drought, the problem is being compounded by Cambridge Water Company continuing to take water for our own public supply from the chalk aquifer beneath. It is clear that with the huge amount of growth planned for this area we must lobby the water company and Environment Agency for better, and sustainable management of our water resources for the benefit of all.

If like us you find the sight of a dried up river unacceptable, please write to your local MP, Water Company and the Environment Agency asking how we are to achieve sustainable water management, and what proportion is to be left for the environment.

**Planning permission for 9 self build houses:** Planning permission has been granted **on appeal** for 9 self-build houses at the bottom of Green End - on the left hand side as you leave the village. This application was rejected by both the Parish and District Council on the grounds that it was outside of the village framework. However, the independent Government planning inspector failed to uphold the grounds for refusal. The main reasons were that the District Council is a Right to Build Vanguard Authority with a statutory duty to provide suitable sites for people waiting to build their own homes. They currently have a short fall of sites and this was the most significant factor in the inspector's decision. Additionally, the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan has not yet been submitted and so can't be taken into consideration because the inspector has no way of knowing if it ever will be submitted. Also, the Village Design Guide submitted to the District Council in May has not yet been officially adopted.

**Parking Bays:** The parking bays in the two District Council sheltered housing schemes are for EVERYONE. No one has exclusive use of any one bay and therefore no right to reserve or demand that they are kept free. Please respect the rights of residents to park wherever they wish as long as they are parking thoughtfully, legally and considerately.

**Grants:** Many thanks to the South Cambs Community Chest for a grant of £495 to Gamlingay School's Out Club to help purchase a large timber storage shed.

#### **Correspondence:**

**Electoral register:** No alterations received.

**ACRE Conference:** Both Clerk and Chair will be attending the conference on 8th November. A variety of workshops is on offer and it is hoped that those chosen will be of benefit to the parish.

**CCC Highways Open Days:** Local Highways depots are holding Open Days when the public may visit, look at the machinery and chat to the officers. Clerk will put a flyer in the notice board.

**CCC Highways Events:** Notification of local events requiring roads closures received. These were mostly to do with Remembrance Sunday parades, and not local.

**Greater Cambridge Planning Policy:** Circulated for Councillors' information.

**Electronic Correspondence:** Nothing arising from the circulated information.

#### **Planning:**

##### **Wheelwrights Cottage: S/2289/19/FL**

Erection of a single storey extension and garage outbuilding was approved.

##### **Low Farm: S/4279/19/FL.**

Erection of a two storey and single story rear extensions was approved.

##### **28 High Street: S/2452/19/FL**

Certificate of lawfulness for proposed garage to rear garden and new permeable block paving to front garden was approved.

#### **Finance:**

**Bank Statement:** The September bank statement was received. Council's current account at the end of September is £17,355-25. It was resolved to transfer the sum of £10,000-00 to the Council's deposit account. All in favour.

**Precept:** The first instalment of the precept totalling £1650-00 has been received.

**Solar Farm:** The fifth instalment from the Solar Farm has been received, but as yet there has been no reply to the letter which was sent in May 2019. Clerk was instructed to write yet again asking for a response, and send recorded delivery.

**Items for the next agenda:** None put forward.

**Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 20th November at 7.30pm in the Reading Room.

As there was no further business, the meeting closed at 8.48pm

Signed .....

Date .....

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