

A meeting of Croydon Parish Council was held on Wednesday 16 March 2016 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.

Apologies: Cllr Smith - domestic duties.

Present: Mr Wheeler, Mrs Slator, Mr Brown, Mr Sole, Cllr Kindersley, the Clerk and two members of public.

Minutes: of the January meeting previously circulated, were agreed and signed. There was no meeting in February, as only two Councillors were available and this is insufficient for a quorum.

Declarations of Interest: None

Councillors: Mr Martin has resigned from the Council as he will be moving away. Council will miss his lively contribution to their discussions. Ms Newland has agreed to fill one of the already existing vacancies and completed the appropriate forms; there are still two vacancies on the Council. Clerk has already received Nomination papers for the election in May, and these were distributed to Councillors. Clerk will make enquiries to see if she may take completed forms to South Cambs (they have to be delivered by hand) or it has to be the prospective Councillor - the instructions given on the Nomination paperwork and the e-mail the Clerk received were ambiguous.

Matters Arising and Village Issues:

Queen Adelaide: The Implementation Group (IG) and Mr Wheeler met with Mr Wenman and saw the refurbishment of the QA first hand - it is splendid, with great attention to detail. Mr Wenman feels the village is against him and he has no support. It is hoped that the IG can work with Mr Wenman, raising any perceived concerns from the village with him so they can be speedily resolved, if necessary. Clerk was asked to write to Clare Gibbons and let her know that it is not appropriate to put an ACV on the pub at this time.

Dog Waste Bag Dispenser: This has arrived and Mr Sole has offered to put it up on site, in discussion with Mr Ralph. Dog waste may be put into any waste bin, as long as it is securely bagged.

Lower Road Footpath Sign: Mr Brown reported that the bent sign and concrete base has been removed. Hopefully a new sign will be in place shortly.

Community Benefit Fund: The Clerk went into Barclays in Royston to try to find out how to open a savings account for the Community Benefit Fund. Because the Parish Council is counted as a Business account, these accounts are dealt with at Stevenage and all the signatories would need to go there to open it. Clerk found that the NSI account Council already holds pay 3 times the interest that the Barclays saving account offers (0.75% instead of 0.25%), so Council felt it would be a better idea to deposit the funds there - all in favour. Clerk will be sending a letter to request a mandate for change of signatories, as Mr Martin was one of the signatories on this account.

Fund Criteria: This has been finalised as below and will be available to anyone wishing to apply to the fund.

Croydon Parish (Cambridgeshire) Community Fund- Grant making Criteria

As administrators of the Fund, grants will be determined by the Parish Council and can only be given to benefit the Parish of Croydon.

We award grants to charities, voluntary or community groups and organisations which are charitable in purpose. We seek to support genuinely good ideas that will make a real difference to the lives and environment of local people.

Grants will be awarded From £100 to a maximum of £2500.

The following criteria are guidelines only and we reserve the right not to progress any initial enquiry to a full application.

Judging Criteria

The main criteria used when assessing applications received will be:

- The social, economic and environmental benefits which will result from the project.
- The level of community support for and involvement in the project.
- The number of people within the Parish that will benefit from the project.

- The ability of the applicant to deliver the project.
- How the work will be continued after the project has been completed, i.e. its sustainability and legacy.
- Value for money.

Other factors appropriate to each application will also be considered.

The Fund supports core costs, new or continuing projects, one-off initiatives, and capital costs. We seek to achieve an equitable distribution of resources across the Parish. Match funding may be required.

Eligibility

- You must have a recognised governing document e.g. Constitution, Memorandum.
- If you are working with children and/or vulnerable people, you must have a Safeguarding Policy in place
- You must be able to provide annual accounts for your organisation.
- You must have a bank account in the organisation's name which requires two signatories for all withdrawals.
- You must have a management committee with at least three members

Grants will not be given to:

- Projects not benefiting people living in Croydon Parish
- Grants to individuals or families for personal needs
- Start-up funding for a project that is unable to start within nine months
- Sponsored or fundraising events or groups raising funds to redistribute to other causes
- Promotion of faith, religious or political causes.
- Improvements to land that is not open to the Parish
- Direct replacement of statutory obligation and public funding, including educational institutions.
- Groups with significant financial funds
- Retrospective grants
- Contribution to endowment fund, payment of deficit funding or repayment of loans
- National charities that are not providing clear local benefits
- Overseas travel or expeditions
- Medical research
- Commercial ventures, unless the group is a registered not for profit organisation
- General appeals
- Animal welfare
- Fees for professional fundraisers

The Parish Council will review the Grant making Criteria annually. The Community Fund will close once the funds are exhausted

Applications should be made in writing in the first instance, to the Clerk.

Applications can only be made once in a 12 month period.

This document was agreed at The Croydon Parish Council Meeting 20th January 2016.

Solar Farm: The hedgerow planting has been carried out on the strip of land between Manor Farm's access and the service road to the solar farm. The entrance to the service road remains incomplete and needs a gate and further improvements, which the County Council will specify.

Trees: After the initial trimming, the Enforcement Officer allowed a further fortnight for the work to be completed - this has not been done so further action will be taken.

Trees/Verges: Following a further 2 week extension to finish the work, the trimming has not been completed so further action will now be taken by CCC Enforcement officer. According to the website, SCDC and CCC put their grasscutting out to tender, so Clerk was unable to discover much about it..

Stock Certificates: Clerk found what she considered to be a suitable frame for the certificates on the internet and presented the information to the Council. It is very similar to frames already in the Reading Room and costs £21-38 per frame. Council asked Clerk to proceed with the order for three frames..

Implementation Group: Mr Ralph reported that the Group is making good progress and only two of the original volunteers have withdrawn. The discussions with Hill are progressing nicely and the Group feels that Hill is a good partner to work with, as most of their comments have been taken on board. The Group hopes to hold a presentation on 23rd April in the Reading Room including the proposed development and the work the Group has been doing. Work has also been continuing on communication within the village and sustainability. It is hoped to arrange a visit to Gamlingay Eco-Hub and to look at the community turbine. The subject of facilities is also being discussed and Tadlow has some tennis courts which might benefit from joint use with Croydon. Display boards that are easy to handle are also being investigated. The IG would like to organise a litter pick in the village but need public liability insurance. Clerk contacted the PC insurers, who said that in order to be covered by the insurance there was certain criteria that must be complied with. No-one must walk on the road, all personal protective equipment must be supplied by the Council, litter picks (mechanical) must be used, heavy duty gloves must be worn, suitable receptacles for the disposal of rubbish collected (including sharps) must be provided, hi-vis jackets must be worn, heavy duty sacks must be provided and a comprehensive risk assessment must be carried out. Anyone under the age of 18 taking part must have parental permission to do so. Mr Brown suggested that the Clerk ask if the existing Insurance can be extended to cover the IG or whether it was possible to take out separate cover. Clerk will make enquiries.

Transparency Code: Mr Wheeler has completed and sent in the application for funding to cover the work necessary to meet the requirements of the Code. He has applied for £20-00 a month and the results are awaited.

BikeBus: It was felt that although a good idea, the bus was launched at the wrong time of year, the publicity was inadequate and the timetables a nightmare to read. Croydon does not have funding to contribute to keeping the bus running (£400 per day). All in favour.

Reading Room Wall: The surveyor's report of the damp wall has been received and circulated. Mr Brown and Mr Sole will extend the guttering, which should solve the problem.

War Memorial: The Clerk visited Mr and Mrs Chamberlain and obtained recent history of the war memorial, and Mrs Barnes detailed her work on the names on the memorial. Everything has been sent in and it is now up to Historic England whether the memorial will be listed.

Finger Post: Mrs Barnes said that the PCC would like to put a finger post in the verge near the war memorial corner indicating the way to the church. Mrs Slator explained where the Old Rectory's water main and the church water meter are sited, and the finger post will be kept well away from them.

Report to the Parishes from Cllrs Kindersley and Smith (previously circulated)

County Council Budget: Much to our surprise quite a lot of readers have been in touch to ask about the County Council budget and so we apologise only a bit for bringing this saga to a close with a report of the County Council's budget meeting – which a number of you saw on TV, as it turns out. Sebastian, as Chairman, had a front row seat and after 11.5 hours (yes) was especially pleased to see a budget finally agreed by 10pm.

So - to context. 2% on the council tax for Cambridgeshire raises about £4.8 million and costs the average band D property owner about £22/year. We are allowed to raise the basic rate by 1.99% per year. This year we also were allowed to raise a further 2% for Adult Social Care – so we could have raised 3.99% in total.

At the budget meeting the council was split between the Tories on the one hand and UKIP, Lib Dems, Labour and the Independents on the other. When a 1.99% council tax increase and not taking the Adult Social Care precept (1.99 plus 0) was proposed it was rejected accordingly.

There was some attempt to broker an alternative around 1.99 and 1 but that was always going to be difficult for UKIP to swallow as UKIP believe in no Council Tax increase ever for anything (it's a key party commitment). Then the Indies agreed to support the Tories on 0 plus 2 and when the latter agreed to run an enhanced budget consultation next year the budget went through. Just.

The end result was firstly to take the Adult Social Care precept. That's good because the National Living Wage is now mostly funded for 2016/17 and for subsequent years. However, the other part of the decision was **not** to increase council tax otherwise. That means that funding which CCC would have got from the 1.99% and will now not receive will have to be taken from reserves. And because we've not taken the opportunity to raise council tax this year when we get to next year we'll

miss it again and for every year thereafter. So we haven't just deprived Cambridgeshire of about £5 million to spend on necessary services in 2016/17 but of the same amount in every subsequent year. Life won't get any easier and this decision just makes it harder again.

Many of us believe that we got it wrong and that most people in Cambridgeshire would agree. We had an open door for 1.99% and 2% and we chose not to go through it. Bad for Cambridgeshire and bad for the Council which in general had been working hard and successfully to develop the sort of honest compromises that enable the committee system to work. *(With thanks to DJJ)*

Devolution: As if there wasn't enough to do in local government and less to do it with there is now substantial pressure from Above (not God, Mr Osbourne) for Cambridgeshire to enter into a devolution agreement with Suffolk and Norfolk. The new organisation will have a directly elected Mayor based around the London model. The Councils have been asked what they would like from this deal so obviously we've all said we want complete freedom to keep our business rates, keep our Council housing and make our own decisions about the things that impact on local people. So that will be ignored.

What is very troubling about this is the speed that Government is forcing on Council Leaders to make a decision – at one stage giving Leaders just 24 hours to decide whether or not this is a good plan for the community they represent. No public engagement possible and so we are all disenfranchised. It'll be decided within two weeks of us being made aware of it, and indeed may well be done and dusted by the time you read this.

We have substantial concerns aside from the democratic deficit. From an entirely selfish point of view do we want the wealth created locally to be gathered up and used to rebuild the A47 in Norfolk, or flood defences in Suffolk or affordable housing in Hunstanton when we have very real problems in Cambridgeshire that need sorting out? Secondly do we really have very much in common with the good people of Felixstowe or Wells-next-the-Sea – delightful tho they may be? We have different interests, concerns and approaches simply based on our geography. Lastly do you want decisions over your local area – Parish, District or County – to be made by someone who might live and work in North Norfolk or South Suffolk? We will keep you posted if we are told anything.

Minor Highway Improvement Bids: The Committee required to agree these has not yet done so but is being asked to approve the bids from Haslingfield PC for Phase 2 of the Parish-wide traffic calming project and from Longstowe PC for speed monitoring equipment. The bid from Hatley PC for speed monitoring is on the reserve list.

Superslow Broadband: Thank you to BT and to Connecting Cambridgeshire for coming to a public meeting in Hatley to discuss the failure - to date - to implement superfast Broadband locally. Lots of good news here - there will be superfast broadband enabled in March 2017....in Hatley, anyway.....What's more, the connection will not be fibre from exchange to box then copper to house but fibre all the way!

In Gamlingay it appears that the Waresley Road quadrant (Manor Road, Murfitt Way, Dickerson/Brockwood Closes etc) have no proper access to superfast because all your homes are connected by a wire directly into the Exchange. For superfast broadband there need to be a connecting box. Now - BT admitted they do not record all those people who are affected so can you **please** - if you are one of those households - contact Connecting Cambridgeshire and explain you are party of the missing Gamlingay quadrant! The more people getting in touch the quicker the issue will be resolved.

Robinson Court Gamlingay: At long last we have something positive to report. We have now met with high level officers at South Cambs who started by offering apologies for the major blip in the delivery of new housing at Robinson Court. In reality, tho', it was the Autumn Statement that really put the kibosh on councils building their own houses so it is a small miracle that South Cambs have managed to find a couple of million quid to do the rebuild of Robinson Court which was first promised 2 years ago.

We are told that a planning application will be submitted by the end of April for 14 units. This will be a mixture of houses and flats. The 14 will be split between market, social rent and equity share – and this will be decided on the scheme's viability. The plans are likely to be much the same as residents saw a year ago and though we had a few issues with some of the design we do not want to do anything which will hold things up at this stage. We have specifically asked that local contractors be invited to tender for the build and have been told that it is up to us to let them know. **So if you are interested please do get in touch.** We believe that the road layout will stay the same and it is hoped that the demolition and build will happen under a single contractor so that it is as fast and smooth a process as possible. The original architect's pictures are available in the Eco Hub.

Bus 15: Because of changes to the way the Budget has been prepared it has been proposed to leave the current timetable for the 15 alone for a year. Do you use this bus? It runs from Haslingfield through Barrington, Orwell, Wimpole and Arrington to Royston Town Centre every Wednesday.

Self Build Housing: The government is very keen on self build and South Cambs is running a pilot to promote this as a means of people getting affordable housing in our District. We have recently been told that in order for the council to benefit financially from this they will be selling off quite a lot of their own land as single plots for this purpose. Some of these will be where we currently have run down garages which are no longer let out. If you are interested in going down this route you need to put yourself on the Self Build Register (on South Cambs website) and they will endeavour to match you with a plot.

Wimpole Footpath: After a stick wielded in the Legal Dept at CCC by Sebastian things appear to be moving on the process of creating a new footpath from the A603 into the Wimpole Estate and hence to the Avenue and the Parish Council is taking this forward as fast as it can. Fingers crossed.

South Cambs Council Tax: South Cambs Council Tax is going up by the maximum allowable under government rules which is £5 per annum for a band D house. A further £180,000 of savings will still be required despite this but it would have been much worse if Council Tax had been frozen. We were glad to support a proposal that meant **all** South Cambs tenants including Sheltered Housing tenants will benefit from a reduction in their rents - the Government rent reduction scheme did not include Sheltered Housing.

Community Governance Review of Haslingfield Parish: The process for creation of a new South Cambs Parish for the new housing at Trumpington Meadows (but in Haslingfield) has now started. The population of Haslingfield parish is set to grow from 1,273 (July 2015) to a forecast 2,351 by 2021. The timing of the review takes into account that the likely number of electors within the Trumpington Meadows area will exceed 150 by the time review concludes. You can access the process at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/content/community-governance-reviews> and you can visit the drop in session followed by presentation to Haslingfield Parish Council meeting at Haslingfield Village Hall Monday 14 March 2016 - Drop in from 5pm Parish Council meeting 7:30pm

Bike Bank: Forward Gamlingay has acquired some funding from Kier Housing to allow it to re-run the very successful Bike Bank project which has already been run for the last 2 years. This project gives young people an accredited qualification in cycle maintenance as well as allowing them to keep the bike they restore. Some of the graduates of this 6 week (2 hours per week) course have gone on to work in cycle shops. If you have an old bike you would like to donate or a young person who would like to take part (probably in the summer term) please contact Lucy Rands lucyrands@btinternet.com

Greater Cambridge City Deal: We have been instructed to stop referring to the Greater Cambridge City Deal as the 'City Deal' because it does cover the whole of South Cambs as well as the City and will affect us all, be it by introducing congestion charging to the City or by putting in a Park and Ride at Madingley Mulch or a bus lane along the A428. All the official documents are available on the South Cambs website but Bridget also sends out notes at regular intervals to people who are particularly interested. Do let her have your e-mail if you would like to be included in these mailings.

Business Workshops: South Cambs Economic Development team (1 person in reality) has been working with Bridget and the Parish Council to create an economic development strategy for Gamlingay and Hatley in tandem with the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan. So far 3 workshops for business owners and employment site owners have been held and a third is due on 17th March. A project is developing out of this to create a website and an associated app which will support businesses in the community. If you have not received an invitation to any of these workshops and are interested in being involved do get in touch with Bridget. Any business is welcome – from a one-woman band to a multi-national!

Elections: We have District Council elections in May and the EU referendum in June. If you are not registered to vote you need to do so fairly urgently. Also, if you are likely to be away or unable to vote you can register for a postal vote - all forms are on the South Cambs website.

Millbridge Brook Meadows: The Wind Turbine Tithe has paid for 5 new trees at the Meadows to replace the ones which some community minded person saw fit to steal. Thanks to All Green Landscapes for putting them in. It is also funding a two day workshop to install a living willow dome in the area where the, now deceased, willow deer were. It is fantastic to see things constantly changing in this lovely community park.

Cllr Kindersley gave a verbal update:-

CCC Budget: CCC did take the 2% offered for Adult Social Care, but didn't take 1.99% in order to get £4.8 million. Because of this, there are going to be cutbacks in social care, which is a huge mistake in Cllr Kindersley's opinion. There is a proposal for an elected Mayor to run Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. Cambridge City and CCC are not likely to sign up to this, even though there is a promise of £1 billion (over 30 years). If it does go ahead, then money that is generated in Cambridgeshire can be spent in Suffolk and Norfolk - good for them, not so good for Cams!

Superfast Broadband: At the meeting in Hatley it was stated that Hatley residents would get fibre to their houses, but there is nothing for Croydon yet. Connecting Cambridgeshire needs to know if you cannot connect to superfast broadband.

Second QA House: Many residents are concerned about parking and access and the justification for a second dwelling is not there. Apparently, it is needed in order to complete the renovation of the QA, which has cost far more than anticipated.

Correspondence:

Village Problems: Council received a letter of complaint regarding dog fouling in Church Lane, farm vehicles and untidy properties. Council's response has been sent to the complainant.

City Deal Consultation Launch: The link has already been circulated, but for your information, details of the initial ideas and the survey are available online at: www.gccitydeal.co.uk/the-western-orbital

Broadband meeting: This was held in Hatley and there is nothing superfast available for Croydon yet, although it is possible (for a small fee) for BT to tweak the phone lines to allow for faster speeds. Hatley will be getting fibre to the house, whereas Croydon will receive fibre to a box and copper from the box to the House. Please let Connecting Cambridgeshire know if you cannot access superfast broadband.

Local Plan Skeleton: this has been published and can be accessed on:

<https://www.scams.gov.uk/local-plan-examination> or <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-plan-review-examination-information>

CCC Reminder: Clerk was surprised to receive a reminder for an invoice that was not due from CCC. She felt it was a waste of paper, time and postage and asked Cllr Kindersley to pass this on.

Balfour Beatty: Clerk also received a questionnaire regarding replacement of streetlights in Croydon and how well had the company done. Cllr Kindersley has been reporting this work to previous meetings, but declined to respond to the questionnaire as he said he has made his views known already.

Cams ACRE Community Fair: This will take place on Tuesday 7 June from 2pm to 6pm at Burgess Hall, St Ives, PE27 6WU

Register of Electors: Changes to the register notified to Council.

AEDs: Meldreth Parish Council are looking at purchasing a job lot of defibrillators in order to obtain a good price. Council discussed this, but as there is nowhere to site one have decided against it.

Commemorative Coin: A coin to celebrate HM Queen's 90th birthday has been sent to Council. It was decided not to purchase any for the village as Council funds could be better spent elsewhere.

Election Timetable: Nomination papers are available from the Clerk and the official SCDC notice of the election will be put in the notice board in line with this. Papers have to be delivered by hand to SCDC Council offices.

Electronic Correspondence: All circulated.

Finance:

Glasdon: The Glasdon invoice for £127-93 to cover the purchase of the Dog Waste Bag dispenser and bags was received, but as there was no meeting in February the Clerk had to obtain signatures out of meeting in order to meet the terms of the invoice. Council subsequently approved this.

CCC Lower Road Speed Limit: Similarly, the invoice for £177-02, being Croydon's contribution to the extended speed limit on Lower Road, needed to be paid before the March meeting took place, so Clerk obtained signatures out of meeting for this - Council subsequently approved the action.

Bank Statement: The balance is currently £7636-06, but this still contains the first Community Benefit Fund payment from the Solar Farm.

Bank Signatories: Mrs Slator has offered to replace Mr Martin as the third signatory on the cheque account. All were in favour of this. Clerk obtained a mandate for this from Barclays and it looks as though Mrs Slator will have to go to Barclays in Royston in person with ID in order to make the change.

Precept: Has been sent in and an acknowledgement of receipt obtained. The first instalment will be due very shortly.

NSI: Balance on the savings account is currently £1762-62.

Items for the next agenda: None put forward.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 20 April in the Reading Room, starting at **7.30pm**. This will be the Annual Meeting, to which representatives of various organisations are invited to give reports.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Signed

Date

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