

A meeting of Croydon Parish Council was held on Wednesday 21 September 2016 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.

Apologies: Mr Sole - on holiday

Present: Mr Wheeler, Mrs Slator, Ms Newland, Mr Brown, Mr Barnes, the Clerk, four members of public, Cllrs Smith and Kindersley.

Minutes: Of the July and August meetings were agreed and signed.

Declarations of Interest: None

Matters Arising and Village Issues:

Queen Adelaide: Mr Wenman finally has permission for a second house in the grounds of the Queen Adelaide. He is hoping to open the pub in the spring, after the drains for the new properties have been laid across the car park..

Dog Waste Bag Dispenser: Mr Ralph and Mr Sole have met and a site has been agreed upon, which everyone find s satisfactory. Mr Sole will erect the post as soon as he has time to do so.

Community Payback Scheme: Clerk will make enquiries about this and report to the next meeting.

Implementation Group: Mr Ralph gave a short update on progress of the Group. The result of the Communications Survey should be available shortly, and negotiations on the affordable housing development are still continuing. The choice of Display Boards required for the village should hopefully be available for the November meeting, for Council's consideration. The litter pick will take place on 22 October, for which Mr Brown has offered to produce a Risk Assessment, as the event is taking place under PC insurance.

Local Highways Improvements: The residents in Larkins Road as pressing for a reduction in the speed limit - 40mph preferred but would be glad of any reduction. Last time Council applied for funding through this scheme the Police had to be consulted, along with CCC Highways, and evidence of the need for the speed limit (on Lower Road) had to be provided. All applications are made on-line and Clerk will make enquiries about it and report to the October meeting.

Car Show: A letter was received from the Car Show committee thanking Council for their financial support, but did not state how much was raised. Mr Ralph said he would send the result through for the minutes. Subsequently received from Mr Ralph:- Total takings on the day were £2689-00, after expenses were paid £2318-00, leaving £1159-00 each for the church and the Reading Room.

Speed Limit Sign: Clerk has reported the 30 sign adjacent to Mr Sole's that was knocked down in an accident to CCC Highways.

Reading Room Wall: Mr Sole and Mr Brown to do this.

Stock Certificates: Clerk contacted the Chair of the Trustees to ask if the framed certificates could be hung in the Reading Room. She had no objection, so this was dealt with after the meeting.

Grass Cutting: Cutbacks in expenditure on grass cutting by both SCDC and CCC Highways have resulted in numerous complaints. Cllr Kindersley said that in future there will have to be community involvement in grass cutting, Parishioners will have to cut the grass outside their own properties. The liability issue was questioned and the meeting was told that if the person cutting is reckless and stupid then they are personally responsible; if not then CCC says it is fine to do it. Cllr Kindersley added that basically, if we don't do it, it will not be done. Verges will be cut twice a year, but if there is a problem with a visibility splay (highway safety) please report it and the CCC Hit Squad will come and deal with it, usually within 24 hours.

Croydon Phone Box: BT is seeking to close/remove many underused phone boxes, and they placed Croydon's phone box in this category. The list Council received from SCDC detailed the boxes that BT is proposing to remove and the majority of them had not been used in the last year. Croydon's phone box has 250 calls to its credit, so Clerk was asked to contact SCDC who are dealing with BT for this, and present Croydon's case for keeping the box in working order.

Members' Interest Forms: were returned to those who were present at the meeting.

At this point the Chairman suspended to agenda to allow Cllrs Kindersley and Smith to give reports and deal with a planning issue so that they could leave for their next meeting.

Clopton Farm: S/2358/16/VC - This application for the site is seeking a variation on application number S/2581/11 (already approved) to increase size of the living accommodation by adding another storey.

The previous application for this site, on which Council had already commented, had not been notified to the neighbouring properties and after it had been, many complaints were received. Council has now withdrawn its previous comments on application number **S/2059/16/PA** because of this and sent the following comment in its place:- Council would like to withdraw its previous "no objections" statement as there have now been grievous concerns raised and therefore these must be seriously considered before any application proceeds.

After perusal of application S/2358/16/VC and hearing the complaints and concerns from neighbouring properties, Council decided to return the following comment: _
Council is concerned about the number of applications and complaints from the neighbours, received for this site and feels it is unable to comment on anything further until the applicant's original application has been decided.

Cllr Kindersley suggested that the neighbours might consider hiring a planning consultant to assist with the presentation of their concerns. The applicant has already taken down a fence that does not belong to him.

County Cllrs Smith and Kindersley gave verbal updates:-

SCDC Chief Executive: The Chief Executive is leaving and it will take 6-9 months to find a replacement, and the recruitment process will cost a lot of money.

Planning Performance: This is improving - there were 960 live applications, now there are only 300, so this is now a much faster process.

Call Centre: Apparently this is appalling - there is approximately a 15 minute wait per call.

City Deal: The paperwork has been published and after consultation, the least popular route for the busway has been chosen. This cuts through the Green Belt, and will leave a section of it on the city side conveniently available for development in the future.

Northstowe: is underway - no affordable properties at present.

Ice Rink: An ice rink has been proposed for a site near the end of the runway at Marshalls. The projected cost is £3m and there is a funding shortfall of £1.83m which SCDC will loan, at no risk to themselves.

Housing Appeals: Due to the failure of the Local Plan, many housing appeals are being lost. The Local Plan Mark II may not be adopted until 2017, if at all.

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

Cambourne West: Oh blimey, he's gone off on a tangent this month, you might be saying. Bear with... You may well be aware that a planning application has been submitted to fill the land between the A1198 and Cambourne with 2350 new homes, business and retail uses, a new secondary school and two new primary schools amongst other things. Not unexpected. However not really welcomed by those of us locally who realise the impact this will have on local roads in our Parishes - yes, even Gamlingay as it copes with yet more rat-running. There will be new exits onto the A1198, realignment of some roads and so on.

Here's what there won't be: any contribution at all to the dualling of the A428 from Caxton to St Neots. There will be a requirement for £8.6m to be spent on a bus priority lane from Cambourne to Cambridge, however. What buses? Where will it go? What sort of engineering will be required? Nobody knows, is the answer - and yet they do know how much it will cost. And because of this take from the S106 it means that we will not be delivering 40% affordable houses on the site. So, the development of a large extension to a sustainable community on a greenfield site can't find enough cash for 40% affordable housing because we want a 'busway'. This is a complete betrayal of local people. So another addition to the rollcall of failure - no 40% at Wing, no 40% at Northstowe and now no 40% at Cambourne West. Why we aren't all rioting in the streets I do not know - other than we're very nice people in South Cambs.

New Monthly Housing Surgery: We have a splendid new housing officer for Gamlingay, Carly Freed, who some of you may remember when she was our PCSO. Carly is very enthusiastic and has suggested that together with District Councillors and the police, we hold monthly housing drop in sessions at the Eco Hub. These will be on the first Monday of the month from 9.30am until 10.30am. Please do come along if you are living in a South Cambs/Housing Association property or if you are in need of housing. Since either Sebastian or Bridget and a PCSO will be in attendance too you may also wish to come and have a chat about any other council related issues or police matters which are bothering you!

Grosvenor Sports Village in Haslingfield: You may have seen or read about the proposed Grosvenor development between the M11 and Trumpington Meadows. What you won't know, unless you're very local and/or very interested, is that site lies almost exclusively in Haslingfield, in the Gamlingay Division.

The Planning application has now been lodged with SCDC. There are many concerns about this development. It would extend 'Cambridge' into the Green Belt which separates the city from neighbouring villages and cause the loss of the green corridor between the city and the M11. Both the City and District Councils have submitted strong evidence in support of retaining the area as Green Belt in the Inner Green Belt Study and other reports submitted to the planning inspector; in contrast, Grosvenor has not established that there are special circumstances for a major development at this location which outweigh its value as part of the Green Belt;

One impact of 520 additional homes will be additional congestion on Hauxton Road, Addenbrooke's Road, the M11 Junction 11 and through Trumpington and indeed is an increase of 45% on the 1200 homes that have been approved for Trumpington Meadows, with a corresponding increase in the pressure on local schools and health and community facilities. The multi-storey sports hub (a large-scale building of up to 9200 sq. m.), the other proposed buildings and the 3 metre high promenade would be intrusive structures and, again, there would be congestion from traffic going to and from the 300 parking spaces which would be provided for sports users

Of course, there is also a risk that further proposals would be submitted by other developers if this development were approved – for example Jesus College is proposing the 'Cambridge South' development on the east side of Hauxton Road near the Grosvenor development, including 1250 homes and a large-scale science park with 1000s of employees.

Lastly the City Deal and the County Council are considering developing an additional Park & Ride site on the District side of M11 Junction 11 and developing the western orbital busway. If this goes ahead it would have a major impact on the Green Belt and accentuate the importance of the land on the City side of the M11 being retained as a green corridor. The very last thing anyone wants is the coalescence of development from the heart of Cambridge right out into Hauxton and Harston.

Special Constable & Policing: It's somewhat frustrating to have to report that our Special Constable Tim was so good that he has now become a full police officer and so we are going to lose him. However, he has promised to find us a replacement as soon as possible. He has done sterling work especially tracking errant motorists at the Iron Church crossroads - we wish him the best for his future and will hopefully see him back in Gamlingay. A lot.

Not entirely unconnected the Constabulary are looking for people to become Special Constables in Cambridgeshire, so if you take an interest in your community and want to make it a safer place, why not consider applying?

Being a Special is a great opportunity to get involved in the exciting world of policing and involves a minimum commitment of only four hours a week. It will also provide you with a broad range of skills and experience, which would be valuable on any CV. Specials provide support over a wide range of policing activity, from roads policing, football matches, and emergency response to major crime and other specialist areas such as domestic abuse and the rural crime team. Like the regular colleagues they work alongside, Specials are sworn in by a magistrate and have the same powers by law, including a power of arrest. Visit the website for more.

Iron Church Junction/Drove Road: Accidents continue to take place at the Iron Church junction and along Drive Road. All the white lines have been redone in the hope that this will alert people to the fact that they have to give way and slow down. The County Council has now advertised the new 50mph speed limit along the road and is preparing to install a number of other safety measures. With the advent of Autumn and leaf-drop this junction is going to get more dangerous – please take care even if you are a regular user.

Robinson Court & Housing more generally: The pace is quickening! The Parish Council has now submitted comments on the planning application to South Cambs as have a number of neighbours. A major concern is that residents are concerned about parking once the garages and flats have been demolished. The project manager has been looking into more estate wide parking and working with housing colleagues to see what can be done. As we all know, following the summer's grass-cutting debacle, SCDC does not own the grass verge as you drive into Grays Rd - it's owned by the County Council. We are looking to see if CCC will give this up to the District (for free, obviously). There are some parts of the grassed area that SCDC does own and the project manager is trying to see if any of this land could be put to parking use

Consultants are undertaking all the full surveys needed, but we raised highway access and drainage concerns as two particular areas of concern. We also impressed upon the Council that whoever wins the tender (currently being drafted) to develop the site works alongside local residents and as part of that they will need to have an appropriate traffic management plan of how they intend to develop.

It may be useful to recap a number of issues that we've covered over the past few years in the Gazette. There was full consultation with residents of Robinson Court, Grays Rd and Avenall's Way about the future of Robinson Court which has led to the decision to demolish them. This was in response to many problems at the flats which were of great concern to people living around them. The flats are now in awful condition and fall far short of expected standards and for the past couple of years have just been used for emergency, temporary housing.

The replacement housing will be let at social, not affordable, rents and will be only for people with a local connection. Equity Share houses are means tested and often go to young people who are first time buyers. They are very popular with young people on low incomes who want to own their own homes - nearly impossible!

Because of changes to the way housing is funded we nearly lost this site. We have gone to great lengths to find the money to redevelop Robinson Court but this does mean some element of market housing to make up the difference. On a wider note we have been able to persuade South Cambs that the new affordable housing on Station Rd and Green End be restricted solely for local people – which is not the normal state of affairs in South Cambs where affordable housing is for general needs and residents from elsewhere may get priority over local people. By doing this we have reduced our housing list in Gamlingay substantially. However – no room for complacency as we are very aware that there is still a burning need for low-cost housing for local people.

Cambridgeshire Insight: Cambridgeshire Insight, located within the www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk website, is a shared research knowledge base for the Cambridgeshire area. It allows users an easy way to access and share data, information and research for deeper insights about their local area. Of particular interest may be the interactive mapping facility, which opens up detailed information on socio-economic features of individual wards and a comparative picture within the county as a whole: <http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/interactive-maps>. If you like data and maps you'll love this...

A428 Busway & Workplace Parking Levy: The next meeting of the City Deal will discuss the preferred option for taking congestion along the A428/Madingley Rd into Cambridge. Anyone who commutes this road during rush hour will know what a nightmare it is. However, the proposals being put forward do huge damage to the Green Belt and have no proper research or evidence behind them - "if we build a busway the buses will come" is how it's been summed up. Like magic, apparently. We shall keep you posted.

Please remember that the deadline for commenting on the City Deal's 'workplace parking levy', which is likely to exacerbate traffic problems throughout Cambridge and the surrounding villages (details at www4.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/citydeal/congestion), is Monday October 10.

Grass Cutting: Complaints about the lack of cutting of the grass verges continue. This is the response we had from South Cambs in relation to some areas: "The areas mentioned in Greys Road, Manor and Murfitt Way have historically been cut by SCDC, this year they have stopped cutting these areas and CCC now have the responsibility for these. CCC were unaware of this situation until late June and so we have decided to cut these for this year three times, the first cut was done on the 7th July and the second is due at the end of August. We will be in contact shortly with all Parishes affected by this with updated plans and an increase to the contribution we will pay." We now have a plan of the verges which South Cambs will be cutting which we can share with you if you wish.

South Cambs Magazine Delivery Problems: We continue to receive complaints about people not receiving the magazine. You should have had one a few weeks before reading this so do let us know if

you have not. In reply to our continued complaints we received the following information from South Cambs:

We use a third party manage the distribution. Most of the magazines are delivered via Royal Mail unaddressed delivery. This is by the local post person but not addressed to individual houses. We can only use this method where the full postcode sector falls within South Cambs.

Where it isn't financially viable to send a team to some addresses (such as five homes in a very remote area) we use addressed mail via Royal Mail. The way we have set up the contract strikes the best balance we can between reliability and affordability. For the forthcoming delivery they will be addressing magazines and posting to all homes in East Hatley. With Gamlingay, they have said they have received a number of queried addresses, so they went through each one individually, and added them to the VIP list. This forces the distributor to make that extra bit of effort with difficult to access properties etc. They also used GPS trackers to monitor distribution in the area, and we will be doing the same on this distribution to make sure that the issues have been ironed out.

Small countries have been invaded with less palaver. Please contact us if - yet again - you receive no South Cambs magazine.

Frustrations with Planning: Many planning applicants have been in touch over the summer to voice their intense frustrations with the Planning Dept at South Cambs. Of particular note we are delighted to report that the Queen Adelaide in Croydon now has permission for two houses in order to fund the re-opening of a much missed pub. Works continue to try and get consent through for the proposed Business Park on Potton Road Gamlingay – still bogged down despite a direct complaint to the Chief Execs of the County and District Councils.

The Council has made a number of new appointments and there is now a sense of direction in the department. However, if you are a planning applicant who needs help please contact us.

Phone Boxes: BT has written to advise it intends to get rid of a number of phone boxes locally and so if you feel strongly about any of these now's the time to say (and definitely before 28th November): Lt Gransden Main Road (0 calls in last 12 months), Hatley St George (5), East Hatley (2), Gamlingay Cinques (0), Croydon High Street (249!), Arrington Hillside (0). If these are Red boxes they can be adopted by the community for £1 - first stop - ask the Parish Council!

Correspondence:

Overhanging trees and hedges: Council has received complaints that, now the school bus is a double-decker, some overhanging branches of trees are hitting the top deck as it passes through the village. Cllr Kindersley said that the reduced budget would not allow any more work to be done on the trees in the village.

Flood Awareness: A questionnaire was received and completed in the meeting. Clerk will post it.

Electoral Register: Amendments to the register were received.

Cambs Not Spotter: You can become a Not Spotter to report where the mobile or wi-fi signal in the area is not good.

Highways Volunteering Pack: Received from CCC and passed to the Implementation Group to see if anyone is interested.

CCC Winter Health Packs: These are available from CCC and contain an information booklet on staying warm and well during the cold winter months, a recipe card, a falls information leaflet, a tea bag, a thermometer, and an evaluation card. Council felt that the idea was patronising and declined the offer of packs.

ACRE Parish Council Conference: This is on Friday 18 November - weekdays are when Councillors are usually unavailable.

ECO Hub tour: The Eco Hub in Gamlingay has been applauded as an example of green building. A tour took place on 22 September and Cllr Smith would also show anyone interested around.

Planning:

Clopton Farm, Croydon: Discussed earlier.

Finance:

Churchyard Maintenance Grant: Clerk has produced a budget so far, but had not been able to check balance it as the bank statement had not arrived. Discuss at next meeting.

Bank Signatories and Statements: The paperwork received was completely wrong (Clerk is apparently the Chairman!), so a letter has been sent along with the paperwork signed as requested.

NSI Signatories: Mr Brown has signed the paperwork, which has been sent off..

Appointment of Internal Auditor: Clerk has sent a message to the proposed auditor and is waiting for a response.

Audit: Completion of the Audit has been received from PKF Littlejohn. Clerk has posted the notice in the board.

Items for next agenda: Churchyard grass cutting grant, Community Payback Scheme.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 16 November in the Reading Room, starting at 7.30pm.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 9.17pm.

Signed

Date

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