

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

Apologies: Cllr Kindersley - arrived later following another meeting

Present: Mr Brown, Ms Newland, Mr Sole, Mr Barnes, Mr Wenman, Mrs Slator, the Clerk and 3 members of the public.

Minutes: of the December and Planning meetings were agreed and signed.

Declarations of Interest: None received

Members' Interests Forms: Copies distributed to those Councillors who were present.

Matters Arising and Village Issues:

Implementation Group:

1) Communication: The end of year notes were sent to 77 households in the village via Mailchimp. Comments were generally good, but there was one bad one. Many villagers have signed up to the Whatsapp group for reporting anything untoward happening in the village and local area.

2) Hillsons: Nothing more has been heard from Hillsons. A small group comprising members of the IG, PC and SCDC have met and there are now no exception sites for development. Any new development has to be driven by affordable housing and must have the support of the village. The developer will only be able to include enough market houses in the proposal to make it viable. Before this can happen, there will have to be a Housing Needs Survey undertaken. This is usually carried out by ACRE, the cost of this being met by a housing association nominated by SCDC or SCDC itself would pay. At the time of the Community Led Plan 78% of the parishioners were in favour of affordable housing. Any affordable housing that might be built in the village would be for people with a connection with Croydon - this includes people who work for businesses in the village. Another meeting was subsequently held regarding the Housing Needs Survey. Any ground for development is usually purchased by an interested Housing Association, but if the village is small then SCDC does have some funding currently available. This would then initiate a review of all the potential sites available for development in the village of which there were 7, but this may be less now. A decision needs to be made by all concerned, whether or not to instigate the Housing Needs Survey. Mrs Slator said this would be put on the agenda and discussed at the next PC meeting. If a survey were undertaken and the results show a need for affordable housing then any of the landowners may offer their sites for consideration. The previous developers were offering a play area and a village green in the proposal; nothing like this has been mentioned by Hillsons. The Chairs of the IG were considering how much longer the IG should remain, as the affordable housing and a play area are the only things left to do.

3) Parish Website:- George has put the minutes he has been sent onto the website. Council discussed the inclusion of agendas on the website, but as George can only upload when time permits, it was not felt to be feasible. Mailchimp and the notice board are to continue to be the chosen publicity methods.

Emergency Plan Template: Deferred until February due to time constraints.

CamBed RR: A meeting has been proposed for a 7.00pm start before a Parish Council meeting, possibly March.

High Street subsidence: Clerk has reported this and received an acknowledgement, stating that the road is likely to be closed for a day while repairs take place, time will depend on the budget available. Mr Barnes suggested a further area of concern, and this was sent to CCC. No response has been received to this.

Speedwatch: Information has been collected was passed to the IG to see if there is anyone interested in training to become a Speedwatch volunteer.

Community/Dementia Friendly cafe: The Tuesday Group will be inviting a guest speaker to the meeting on 5 March to speak about understanding dementia.

Drain in the lay-by: This has been cleaned out.

Noise Complaints: At the QA have been dealt with - no further problems to date.

Parish Council responsibilities: Clerk to send a copy of these to each Councillor.

South Cambs District Cllr Williams gave a verbal report.

Not much has been happening at SCDC due to the Christmas holiday.

IT system: There are still problems with IT following the disastrous crash, but the system is working at approximately 50%. There is a need to discover why the IT system crashed and how it can be put right. It seems that maybe the joint (3 counties) server changeover with no "dry run" could be to blame. A Customer Portal is to be set up but if you are in doubt that your e-mail has not reached SCDC then please telephone.

Planning: The department is still playing catch-up because of the system problems.

Mr Ralph asked if Cllr Williams could discover anything about the mechanical gutter cleaning equipment offered by SCDC, as it would help greatly with the village Clean-up day.

As there were no other questions following the report Cllr Williams left the meeting.

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

Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service: We make no apology for starting with a recap of the CFRS over the last year - this is a vital service that none of us know we need until we need it really badly! With record calls, a very busy summer, new life-saving equipment and a good inspection result, 2018 was a demanding and memorable year for Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS).

Crews from stations up and down the county including Gamlingay, of course, were kept busy attending more than 7,000 incidents, including fires, rescues and road traffic collisions, as well as supporting other services in neighbouring counties. The Combined Fire Control, which also serves residents and mobilises fire engines to incidents in Suffolk, took more than 18,000 calls, of which 11,000 were received from Cambridgeshire residents. The summer period saw significant numbers of calls due to the hot and dry weather conditions, which caused a large amount of fires in the open across both counties.

Of the incidents attended by Cambridgeshire crews, more than 2,100 were fires, either in homes, buildings or outdoors. Crews also responded to 491 road traffic collisions, 126 animal rescues and 55 rescues in water. Staff across different areas of the Service completed more than 10,000 hours of community safety activity across Cambridgeshire ranging from visiting vulnerable people in their homes to carry out safe and well visits, to engaging with businesses and community groups.

Around 13 per cent of this activity was completed by crews on the new roaming fire engines, which were introduced last January. These fire engines are crewed during daytime hours and based in rural locations, providing additional fire cover for emergency calls, particularly in the areas where the local on-call fire engine is not available. During the year they attended more than 400 incidents while also delivering community safety activity.

At the end of 2018, CFRS was named as one of the two best performing fire and rescue services of 14 services inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS). The Inspectorate found the Service was one of only two services who were 'good' across the entire inspection process, and one of only two services who were 'good' across every aspect of looking after their people. The Service also welcomed more than 50 new firefighters during 2018, who joined wholtime and on-call stations across the county. Combined Fire Control also welcomed 14 new members of staff.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority is proposing up to a three per cent increase to the fire service's proportion of council tax for 2019/20, equating to an extra £1.98 a year for a Band D property.

Combined Authority - Budget: Did you respond to the Combined Authority's Budget Consultation? Well it's not altogether surprising you didn't, as it was held over Christmas. Which is bad enough but additionally there was no perceptible effort to publicise it. As you know, there is considerable

turbulence at the Combined Authority. Questions have been asked about the escalating revenue costs, now over £5M per annum and rising, compared to the Mayor's promised figure of £850K. The authority's fourth Chief Financial Officer in 18 months was unexpectedly sacked shortly before the consultation was opened, for challenging the affordability of some of the Combined Authority's many promised schemes. The Combined Authority's finances are very much under the spotlight.

And yet! The proposals published for consultation were the same as those presented to the Combined Authority Scrutiny Committee and the Combined Authority Board before the unexpected departure of the Chief Financial Officer. This is very surprising, given that disagreement with the Chief Financial Officer's judgement of those proposals was a key reason for his dismissal....

After almost 2 years in existence the Combined Authority led by Mayor James Palmer is still in chaos and is failing to deliver anything to benefit you and me even though they are spending millions. At the time of writing they have neither a full time Chief Executive nor a Finance Director even though the costs of running the office and staff is over £7 million. The last Finance Director pointed out that many of the grand plans, including the Cambridge Metro, had no money at all to build them and as things stand there is no clarity about where the required £3 - £4 BILLION is going to come from. However, we have been promised that all will be revealed in early spring so watch this space!

The Greater Cambridge Partnership (The City Deal as was) is improving slightly and has been building new cycle ways and is soon to start on an extension to the Trumpington Park and Ride site. They are also finally considering 'intelligent charging for Cambridge City'. This is the modern term for what would have been called congestion charging but which is more sophisticated and more sensitive. IF it is implemented it will be with a good and affordable public transport system so that we might find leaving our cars at home a more attractive proposition than driving them.

More Budget: Sorry, but it is that time of year - and as taxpayers you need to be informed about decisions made that impact your lives and pockets. Many councils have a huge overspend in special needs funding for children. In Cambridgeshire this is expected to be £8.4M in 2019/20. The Schools Forum has agreed to move £1.7M into special needs funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant, which would normally go directly to schools - meaning that a typical two-form entry primary school would 'lose' £7,500 into funding of support for children with special needs.

The overspend is a result of rapidly rising numbers of children with special needs. In Cambs the number of children attending special schools rose 20% between 2017 and 2018, with a 13% increase in children with an Education Health & Care Plan. Although the government recently announced an additional £125M nationally to support council spending on special needs this year, it came with a thinly veiled demand that Cambridgeshire must stop moving money from the schools block into the high needs block, in return for its share of the £125M which will be rather less than helpful.

Rather more generally, the County Council's budget and council tax "may" be set at February 5th's meeting - the Administration of the Council has indicated it will not actually put forward a budget but will rely on that of Chief Officers. Complete and utter abdication of responsibility. (All the opposition groups are likely to submit an alternative Budget for consideration). The level of savings required in the council's current draft budget is based on a 1.99 per cent increase in general council tax and an additional 2 per cent for the Adult Social Care precept. The council could, if it wished, raise general council tax by a further 1 per cent, yielding an additional £2.75m in council tax.

Bassingbourn Children's Centre: Some Children's Centre services are now back in Bassingbourn though they are now called child and family zones with outreach services. Services are based at the former Children's Centre building now known as Bassingbourn Pre-School.

Bus subsidies: Bus services are terrible and getting worse. We should be looking at expanding the services locally not shutting them down so we still await the outcome of the Mayor's bus review with some trepidation, and a clue as to how current subsidized buses are to remain operational in the new financial year. The total annual subsidy cost is about £2 million. The County Council has been providing that subsidy on behalf of the Mayor but contingency funds for 2019-20 have not been identified.

The B Word: Councils (and Government) are now waking up to the realisation that Brexit is a matter of weeks away. From a County Council perspective urgent work is now being undertaken to cover a number of areas of concern. Firstly, EU citizens will need to apply for settled status by December 2020 at a cost of £65. There are County responsibilities for making sure any EU children who are looked after have applications made, and that children who have been adopted (but have EU birth certificates) are included. The County and the Police are working on concerns that hate crime and

civil unrest may increase; and there are concerns that hold-ups at the ports will have a knock-on impact on the A14, which is already struggling (as some of you many have noticed!).

If we were to leave the EU without a deal all the EU regulations lapse. There is work going on in Parliament to bring those regulations into UK law, but all the Councils' documents then need to refer to UK law and not EU law for them to be valid. We will also lose some EU funding and urgent work is being done to identify what. District Councils are examining any potential impact on housing and there is increasing concern in the agricultural sector re workforce.

Art brings people together: It is brilliant that Forward Gamlingay are going to be running some more art classes aimed at bringing people together to help them make friends and have fun. Everyone will be welcome (though places are limited) but the charity is particularly keen to attract people who've experienced mental or physical ill health, disability or whose circumstances mean that they are at risk of being isolated and lonely. Contact the Eco Hub for more info or to volunteer.

East West Rail: We await an announcement at the end of January on the options for public consultation on the missing link between Bedford and Cambridge on the East West Railway. We also await Highways England's announcement of the route for the dualling of the Caxton - Black Cat route; now expected in February. Both of these announcements were promised before Christmas (2018).

CBRR - which is campaigning for the consideration of a northern Route alongside any others in the mix - has posted up a number of new documents to its website - <http://www.cambedrailroad.org> - including correspondence to and from the Secretary of State and East West Rail Company.

Barrington Trains: Following the successful demolition of the Chimney before Christmas Cemex have advised that following the grant of planning permission, trains are due to resume on Monday, January 28th with one train a day, five days a week. Cemex will also be holding a safety presentation in the school in early February.

Jobs & Employment: House prices in South Cambridgeshire make it very difficult for many businesses, including the Councils to recruit staff. South Cambridgeshire District Council is hoping to fill quite a number of job vacancies early this year including apprenticeships. If you are thinking about a job change please do keep an eye on the website site. SCDC has a good reputation as a good employer and offers flexi-time, excellent training and many other incentives to ensure that it attracts the right people.

Trap Road Guilden Morden: This Land Limited are now seeking to submit an outline planning application for up to 8 dwellings on land within the development envelope at Trap Rd within several weeks. This would seek to establish the principle of the development as opposed to approving detailed design. If you have any comments please contact the Parish Council.

Correspondence:

SLCC Action Plan offer: A conference was being held offering help with Croydon's action plan for the death of a senior person of state.

Electoral register: Alteration circulated for Councillors' information.

Greater Cambridge Partnership Housing Strategy Survey: This has been circulated to Councillors for completion on-line.

Proedge Engineering: A former employee of the Highways Dept of CCC Highways who worked as a Traffic Engineer, Structures Engineer and Project Manager has set up his own company offering highways design and construction work. It is unlikely that Croydon would have need of his services.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points: The lady dealing with the project (Maddie Alpar) is willing to come out and talk to Council if it is felt that a charging point in the village is required.

Electronic correspondence: All circulated

Any subsequent receipts:

Planning:

Old Farm: Refused as the annexe was deemed to be a separate dwelling.

Brickyard Farm: Refused as the application did not meet the required criteria.

Finance:

Precept: After discussions among the Councillors, the following figures were decided upon:-

Insurance

£400 - 00

Rent	£200 - 00
Clerk	£1400 - 00
Audit	£40 - 00
Subs	£60 - 00
Election	£200 - 00
Cemetery and Village	£500 - 00
Council/Website	£200 - 00
Reading Room	£300 - 00

Total precept for 2019-2020 £3,300 All in favour

It was decided that George Ralph should be offered £20-00 a month for his invaluable assistance with the village website. All in favour. Clerk to contact him with this offer.

Verbal report from Cllr Kindersley:-

East/West Rail routes announcement to be made by the end of January 2019. There is already a room booked for the consultation. There are 5 possible routes - all trains on the south side will enter to the south of Shepreth. There will be a public consultation and a final decision is likely to be made before the summer recess of parliament. There is a need to present a much better scheme than the East/West Rail Company has come up with. Mayor Palmer has a map with the track coming from Royston; Addenbrookes Hospital is the key and a station is needed there. Housing is also a key driver for this railway. Areas where there is no development are being looked at for the railway, and then houses can be put there. The approximate projected settlement size is 40-50k dwellings. Cllr Kindersley is happy to speak to the village about the proposed railway routes, but the presentation will need a different title.

Items for next agenda: None put forward.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13 February 2019 in the Reading Room, starting at 7.30pm, preceded at 7.00pm by a Railway Presentation from Cllr Kindersley .

As there was no further business, the meeting closed at 9.08pm.

Signed

Date