

## **A meeting of Croydon Parish Council was held on Wednesday 20th January 2021 via Zoom at 7.30pm.**

Due to Government advice on social contact and distancing, open Council meetings are suspended until further notice and the required meetings will be held remotely.

**Apologies:** Mr Brown - unavailable, Ms Newland - convalescing.

**Present:** Mrs Slator, Mr Barnes, Mr Wenman, Mr Wheeler, Cllr Williams, Cllr Kindersley, two members of the public and the Clerk.

**Declarations of Interest:** None received.

### **District Cllr Kindersley gave a report to the meeting:-**

**Arrington Parking:** The original consultation held in Arrington by CCC was sadly lacking, as it did not reach everyone who has been inconvenienced by the parking. Wimpole Park states that parking on site is controlled in order to limit the number of people in the Park at any one time. This is ridiculous as people who park in Arrington can enter the park via the Arrington Gate, and are therefore not counted! The amount of car parking in Church Lane and Church End in Arrington, and sometimes on the A1198 and in Wimpole gateway, is getting worse. It seems that CCC Highways is willing to put double yellow lines on the roads as requested by Arrington Parish Council, however it is not certain how effective these will be and whether it will push the parking further towards Croydon - time will tell.

**Flooding:** The owner of the Solar Farm in Croydon has been approached regarding compliance with Condition 5 of the Planning Permission, but is not engaging. It is estimated that one third of the flood water is coming from the Solar Farm and the remaining two thirds from field run-off and rainfall. A local farmer owns and manages a lot of the fields and has managed them well, with new hedges, fences and well maintained ditches. Arrington PC will be discussing this situation with him.

**Thakeham:** This proposal for 25,000 houses locally has no support. South West Cambs Action Group has already been working on it, and both Anthony Browne MP and Sebastian have been interviewed on Radio Cambridgeshire about it. Remember that the "enemy" is Thakeham and not each other, and all those affected should work together to prevent the development. There is a Zoom meeting with Anthony Browne on Thursday 21st January regarding this matter, details of which have been circulated to Councillors.

**Coronavirus:** The vaccination centre in Stevenage is up and running, and all those who are eligible should now have received their first jab.

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

### **Written report from County Councillor Kindersley**

#### **South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council - January 2021**

The Gamlingay Division comprises the Parishes of Abington Pigotts, Arrington, Barrington, Croydon, Gamlingay, Guilden Morden, Litlington, Hatley, Orwell, Shingay-cum-Wendy, Steeple Morden, Tadlow and Wimpole. This report is /for all Division Parish Councils but please be aware that it will include items that may have little or no relevance to your particular Parish. Apologies in advance!

**Seasons' Greetings:** We would like to wish all readers a very peaceful and prosperous New Year 2021. Here's to hoping that 2021 is not quite the rollercoaster that we endured in 2020! Things have not started well....

**2021 Lockdown :** Although it is really tough having yet another national lock down it is undoubtedly the right thing to do in order to reduce the ever increasing burden on the NHS. At the time of writing we are seeing over 50% increase weekly in cases in South Cambs and unprecedented pressure on our hospitals. Most of the outbreaks locally appear to originate from workplaces but then they very quickly transfer into family households and into schools. The County Council will be working with the NHS to

identify high risk workplaces and to roll out lateral testing in them to pick up the 20%-30% of people who are infected and not showing symptoms.

We cannot emphasise strongly enough how vital it is that you completely isolate yourself and your household for the required time if you have either had a positive test or been in contact with someone who has. This is the only way that transmission to vulnerable people who are most likely to die can be stopped. The vaccine is going to take time to roll out and people will die while they wait for it if we do not all do everything we can to protect them. Though the new variant is 50-70% more transmissible the rules to control it are exactly the same - Hands, Face, Space. The end is in sight but we can get there quicker by all playing our part.

We are expecting further funding from Government to help support local businesses that have had to cease trading or which have seen significant reductions in their income. Please keep a close eye on the South Cambs website, sign up for our newsletter or contact either the council or your councillors if you need help.

Pubs in South Cambridgeshire, where under half of the income comes from food, can now apply for Government financial support via the District Council. The Government's Christmas Support Payment (CSP) has been introduced as a form of additional support over the festive period for 'wet-led' pubs. To claim the grant, which is administered by the Council, local pubs which derive less than 50% of their income from food sales can receive a one-off payment amounting to £1,000 each. Businesses may receive more than one grant where they have more than one eligible property. Applications close 31/01/2021.

**Gamlingay Gym:** As reported last month South Cambridgeshire District Council is working with the CAM Academy Trust to find a solution to the possible closure of the gym. The council commissioned an independent report (which is now with both organisations) which has drawn on evidence from the people who have run the gym in the past as well as more recently and has come up with a number of options for further investigation and debate.

We very much hope that a solution will be found and that the gym can remain open. However, any facility like this can only survive if it is financially sustainable. The gym has managed in the past but it has been quite tight at times and so if we want to keep it we have to use it more than is currently the case. The more people who use the gym the better it will be. Better equipment can be leased, staff can be paid for opening longer hours and so on. Covid has shone a light on the importance of physical health and the gym is a year round solution for many people of all ages and abilities.

**Vaccine Delivery:** Gamlingay and the Hatleys are served by the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group whereas most of the rest of the Division is served by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group. This makes it quite hard at times to know what exactly is going on. We get weekly briefings from Cambridgeshire and we are very grateful to the Practice Manager at our surgery for answering questions about what is to be offered to residents. A message has been sent to all patients of the Greensand's Surgery explaining that patients will be called according to their place on the priority list and may have to attend the Weatherly Centre in Biggleswade to receive their vaccine. This is obviously impossible for those without a car and it's also difficult to understand how people who are shielding (and therefore not meant to get in a car with anyone outside their household) are going to get their job. We have a list of questions we are awaiting a response to - if there is anything you want us to add please do contact us.

If you are contacted with an appointment and cannot get there please let us know. We are not sure yet what the solution will be but it is helpful to have evidence of a need. Lastly please be aware this is a very fast moving situation so please be aware things may have moved on by the time you read this!

**Shops:** Villages such as Gamlingay, Orwell and Barrington are so much more fortunate than many other villages because we have good high quality local shops. For many of us life would have been so much more difficult without them. It is undoubtedly safer to shop locally as well as ensuring that our shops survive to serve us once the pandemic is over. A big thank you to them all.

**What is the OxCam Arc?:** The OxCam Arc, also known as The Green Arc, is a geographical construct stretching from Oxford to Cambridge taking in 5 counties, 10 universities and 4 Local Enterprise Partnerships. 3.8 million people live in the Arc participating with 2 million jobs and contributing £111bn to UK plc. Government sees it as a driver for economic growth which will benefit the national economy.

Local authorities of all sizes need money to do things and the argument is that by working together through the Arc we stand a better chance of attracting significant amounts of investment into infrastructure, including green, water and energy infrastructure, economic growth as well as housing to address our huge problems of housing affordability.

The imminent improvements to the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet is an Arc project. Admittedly this work is 10 years overdue but anyone who has seen how dangerous and how congested it is will know that it's really important. On a much larger scale, East West Rail is an Arc project – at least geographically.

So it is important that we all engage with the Arc because if not we could end up with things being done to us with little opportunity for influencing it. Bridget leads the work on the Environment work stream and intends to make the greening of the Arc the most significant thing about it. This will mean agreeing to a set of principles for protecting, restoring and enhancing the natural environment. Land returned to wildlife, streams and rivers flowing all year round, clean air and significant biodiversity net gain. We also need low carbon transport accessible for all, greatly reduced car use and ownership and zero carbon homes which are cheap to run. The list is as endless as the ambition is great!

If you want to know more there is a growing library of publications including an Economic Prospectus and an Arc Joint Recovery Strategy. The Arc Universities Group has its own report and website, The RSPB has published The Green Arc and we will soon publish the Environment Principles. The Government is starting work shortly on developing a Spatial Framework for the Arc. This is a project that will last decades and it is up to us to make it positive for Cambridgeshire, for South Cambs and for every individual Parish and – most importantly – for YOU!

**Christmas in Gamlingay:** An early Santa delivery in South Cambridgeshire saw almost 1,000 traditional festive turkey dinners delivered to the most in-need families and vulnerable and elderly residents across the District and many thanks to all the volunteers (including the chefs!) who did such a brilliant job.

The mammoth operation was in the planning for just a few weeks funded with money from DEFRA and the Government's Winter Support Grant administered by South Cambridgeshire District Council. Of the meals delivered, 880 were cooked by the C3 Church group and sent out to 41 villages across the district. 122 of those meals were for families with children under 18 and the rest for older residents who may not otherwise have had a Christmas dinner. They were in frozen form for reheating on Christmas Day.

On the subject of Christmas Sebastian was very happy to be able to cut through the red tape that had wrapped itself around the issue of Christmas lights in Gamlingay. His appeal to the County Council CEO in the end meant Gamlingay was suitably festive!

**Laptops for Children:** Do you know any family that might need help getting online – especially for homeschooling? South Cambridgeshire District Council is using part of a £30,000 grant allocated to the county to support local charities and community organisations, such as Cambridge Online. The long-established digital charity helps provide data packages and/or devices to children in families who currently have no internet access, enabling them to get online to learn and keep up-to-date with school work and to socialise.

Digital exclusion creates additional problems for those already experiencing poverty, with nine million people in the UK struggling to use the internet independently. School closures during lockdowns and staggered returns to classrooms have meant that children in households without internet connectivity have been particularly impacted in their education by not being able to access online learning.

In response to the pandemic, Cambridge Online has been providing free computer tablets and internet connections to isolated people across Cambridgeshire, giving them access to the outside world, such as when ordering food deliveries online or keeping in touch with family and friends. For more details see Cambridge Online, email [help@cambridgeonline.org.uk](mailto:help@cambridgeonline.org.uk) or call the Cambridge Online helpline on 01223 300407, quoting 'South Cambs Winter Support Grant'.

The District Council is also supporting Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS) with a £5,000 grant and from 06/01/2021 parishes and community groups will be able to apply for sums of up to £500 for local projects which provide food, fuel and essential supplies.

**Planning at South Cambs:** South Cambs have welcomed the findings of an independent review of the District Council's Planning Committee, which says members have "a clear understanding of their role" and "good accountability for their decisions". The review by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) was commissioned as part of continuing work to further strengthen the South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) Planning Service, which it shares with Cambridge City Council.

The report praises the Council for reacting quickly to the Covid-19 pandemic and adopting new guidance, protocols and procedures to enable the Planning Committee to meet virtually. It praises the Committee's accessibility, saying accessing it is "relatively easy both in its live form and via web casting".

It adds that the size of the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Planning Committee appears to strike the right balance of skills and experience and that "the Council has maintained a good focus on public engagement, especially through maintaining the capacity for public and parish councils to speak at Committee."

In addition, the review also looked carefully at specific processes – including how Parish Councils can provide feedback and make a request for an application to be decided by Committee. This process is covered by the Council's Scheme of Delegation. The Report says the current scheme, which was adopted last year, is "a much more transparent model". As suggested by the report, this scheme will be reviewed this year.

The PAS report endorses existing plans for the service to provide additional training and support to Parish Councils on planning matters to foster closer working relationship and further improve Parish Councils' knowledge and understanding of the planning process. It is also supportive of the service's recently refreshed member development programme as a key way of helping members and officers to explore together the wide ranging challenges facing South Cambridgeshire.

**Redeployment of County Council Officers:** Please be aware that as CV figures mount officers from all parts of the County Council are deployed to manage various pandemic-related functions eg to run temporary mortuary facilities. As of December, there were 360 members of staff available for redeployment of which 18 are currently redeployed although currently most support is to the hub and contact tracing. We will likely see in the next few weeks these redeployment rates increase to support mass vaccinations and lateral flow testing which means – apologies! – that all other services provided by CCC will take second place in the queue.

**Cambridgeshire's New Town?:** Sebastian writes: "A West Sussex speculative development company is proposing to create a new sprawling town of 25,000 homes between and encompassing the villages of Shepreth, Melbourn, Meldreth, Whaddon, Bassingbourn, Wimpole, Orwell, Barrington and Foxton. The new town, dubbed 'South West Cambridge,' would profoundly change the hinterland of a multitude of villages and eradicate the rural nature of much of South Cambridgeshire.

The developer, Thakeham, has missed the deadline for the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan's 'Call for Sites,' in spite of having spent the past two years preparing its scheme, during which time it will have been fully aware of the South Cambridgeshire Planning process. It now proposes a late submission in the Call for Sites. While it has contacted relevant landowners, Thakeham has made no contact with local residents or their elected representatives. The South Cambridgeshire development hierarchy is structured around its largest population centres at Cambourne and Northstowe, which are served by the A428, the Guided Busway and the planned new Cambourne Station, as well as its new schools and health services.

An action group - South West Cambridge Action Group - has been set up and you can see their website at [www.swcag.org](http://www.swcag.org) for further information. Although Planning is a District Council matter District Councillors have been advised not to comment as this might prejudice their position later on in the process."

A meeting with the developers - Thakeham - revealed that they had not intended to use the Local Plan process. They were asked to - and are doing so - but concurrently they are looking at ways of delivering their town by leapfrogging the Local Plan. So that's worrying. As is the fact that they informed a wide range of Government departments of their plans before they become public - not least Homes England. Why?

**Winter Support Packages:** Cambridgeshire County Council will be offering Winter Support Packages to families to make sure that, not only all children have access to food whether they are eligible for free school meals or in a range of other categories, but also that families and individuals who might struggle with other essential bills, such as utilities, can be supported.

The food support will come via a voucher sent to families automatically, using a system many schools are already using. Each eligible child will receive a £15 voucher for each week of the school holidays (two weeks at Christmas and one week in February). Those eligible for the voucher will be those eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium, funded two year olds, eligible for Free School Meals (including those not currently on a school roll) and eligible for 16+ bursary. In addition to the Food Vouchers, the scheme is also available to support these same families and individuals, as well as many more, with other immediate needs, including (but not limited to) other essential supplies and food, household energy and water bills and essential white goods in addition to those listed above, those eligible for this additional support will include: households who receive income-related benefits and households facing financial hardship - who councils are aware of; families identified

as 'just about managing' by schools, anyone with an Education, Health and Care Plan, Care Leavers, Young Carers and people with 'No Recourse to Public Funds' status - such as asylum seekers. Anyone in need of additional support can access it using 0345 045 5219 or going to the website.

**EU Regional Development Fund supports 'Shop Local' South Cambs Directory:** A £140K grant from the EU Regional Development Fund has helped make possible a new South Cambs business directory aimed at encouraging and facilitating patronage of local businesses who are invited to register at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/local-business-directory>

**Government Covid Business Support Grants:** Updates about the government grants continue to go to Gamlingay Businesses for whom we have contact details; including the regularly updated council business newsletter, Open for Business. Bridget has contacted all those businesses who should be eligible for the last round. If any local businesses think it might have been missed out - especially if they can evidence hardship as a consequence of Covid, please get in touch straightaway.

**Housing Refugees:** Up to 12 refugee families, around 48 individuals, from war-torn countries will be offered homes in South Cambridgeshire in a three-year plan agreed by the District Council. Following a decision in 2019 to house a small number of families as part of our contribution to the national and international commitment to assisting refugees, South Cambridgeshire District Council has already helped four families (15 individuals) start new lives in the District. Councillors agreed to continue to provide help for up to four new refugee families per year for each of the next three years, if funding and support continue to be available.

This will include those who have been forced from their homes in Syria, Iran or Sudan, who require urgent medical treatment, who are survivors of violence and torture and include women and children.

It is anticipated that the waiting time for local families who are already on the Council's housing waiting list, and who are in the greatest need, will not be affected. The Council will be able to decide which housing it offers to the programme, thereby ensuring the least impact on existing levels of need within the District. The Council is working with an existing resettlement team at Cambridge City Council to integrate the four families who arrived during 2019/2020 into their new homes and communities, and to ensure practical support is in place.

**Face Masks:** Face coverings must now be worn on transport to secondary school or college. If you have children over 11 years old, please be aware of the new guidance.

**Council Finance:** Despite Covid and other financial pressures facing every council, South Cambs District Council is in a good financial position going forward to 2023 and we will be working on plans to meet the need to find some £5million in savings over the course of the coming five years through efficiencies and new income streams which we have every confidence in achieving.

The current Medium Term Financial Plan has taken a worst case scenario approach with no provision for the Government providing support for the loss of Business Rate income arising from Covid 19 and an expectation that the Fair Funding Review will now happen for the financial year 2022/23 and that it will result in the council losing a substantial amount in Business Rate income as a result of the redistribution of that income to council's with adult social care responsibilities.

In Quarter 1 it was difficult to give a full assessment of the impact of Covid 19 on the council's finances. Unfortunately, Quarter 2 is just as difficult, because Government support for the loss of income for the first four months of this financial year has only just been received and we have only just been asked to submit our bid for the next four months. Moreover we still await the Government's decision on whether or not it will reimburse us for the loss of Council Tax and Business Rates due to Covid 19.

The loss of income has impacted on Commercial Waste and Planning but Government has promised to make good for most of these losses, but the money is slow in coming through. As to additional costs arising from Covid 19 the Government has promised £1.9m to support us with so far £1.8m received.

The Government emphasises in the Spending Review that spending power for local authorities (i.e. the total amount of money that a local authority has to spend) will increase by around 4.5% for 2021/2022 however the majority of this will be funded by Council Tax. This will worsen the situation in rural areas for rural residents. Already in 2020/2021 rural residents pay, on average, 22.7% (£105) per head more in Council Tax than their urban counterparts due to receiving less government grant and rural residents fund 68% of their Local Government Spending Power through Council Tax compared with urban residents who fund theirs by 55%. So, rural residents pay more, receive fewer services and, on average, earn less than those in urban areas and that is inequitable – don't you think?

**What does my Council Tax buy?:** Councillors often get asked “What does my Council Tax buy?” so we thought we’d supply some examples over the next few months. You may be aware that when a child comes into care, the County Council becomes that child’s Corporate Parent. This means we have the collective responsibility as a Council, ie elected members, employees and partner agencies, for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by us until the age of 25.

Latest data shows we have 714 children in care for whom we are responsible. 74 of them are unaccompanied children seeking asylum and 229 are in long term placements or foster homes. Sadly this figure is declining - mostly due to Covid - and so if you are interested in fostering do please get in touch! 65 are disabled and 77% come from a white ethnic background. At any one time between 20 and 30 of these children are ‘missing’. The good news is that the number of adoption orders granted is up by 15% and increasing.

**Barrington Quarry:** Cemex have advised that train movements are planned to restart now that HS2 drilling machines are back in action. A Liaison meeting is being planned to bring residents up to date.

**Barrington Issues with Mud on Road!:** Following a series of complaints Seearo advise that the front area of the site is now in the process of being concreted. In addition, a wheel-washer is being trialled at another site before installation at Barrington and a road sweeper has been contracted to clear the road daily at Foxton Road until further notice. Please me know if there are any further issues with this stretch of road; and don’t forget to plot any problems online at <https://highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/>

**146 Cambridge Road Wimpole:** South Cambs Planning Committee is being asked to agree the following in relation to 146 Cambridge Road Wimpole:

It is recommended that the Planning Committee authorise the Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development that in the event that engagement with the owner/occupiers of the site is unsuccessful in securing compliance with the condition, to initiate measures required to secure compliance with condition 1 of Planning Permission S/0583/14/FL through an application to the Court for an injunction under S187 B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

**Parking at Arrington:** The parking situation at Arrington continues to deteriorate. National Trust visitors who cannot get or don’t want tickets (which allow access to the car park) are parking dangerously on Church End and Church Lane Arrington and on the A1198 itself to access the Wimpole Estate. This effectively blocks the local roads to farm traffic, bin lorries and - most recently - the bus whose operator is now threatening to stop accessing the village (and hence Croydon). An emergency meeting is scheduled to discuss next steps.

**Your Councillors** are always ready to help. If you have any questions about these - or indeed any other matters, please do not hesitate to contact County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley on 01767 651982 or skindersley@hotmail.com or write to the Manor Barn, East Hatley, SG19 3JA

#### **District Cllr Williams gave a report to the meeting.**

**Planning:** The review by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) indicated that in some cases there has been a breakdown of trust and the Cabinet has decided to set up a group to make recommendations on the recommendations of the PAS! Planning is separate to political side of planning and the Monitoring Officer has been involved because of this. The Parish Councils can now respond to Site Submissions made for the Local Plan to examine. Cllr Williams has to be very careful what she says and does regarding the Thakeham proposal - she could lose her vote on the Planning Committee when the application does come to SCDC. However, she did state that she cannot support unsustainable development wherever it is.

**Refuse Collection:** Please make sure that the bin handles are sanitised when putting them out for collection. This will help keep the operatives as safe as possible.

**Solar Farm Run-off:** Cllr Williams is working on this.

The Chair thanked Cllr Williams for attending and she left the meeting.

#### **Cllr William's written report to the meeting.**

**Covid-19 - Grants:** SCDC has opened applications for local businesses affected by the most recent lockdown restrictions - Tier 4 restrictions from 26 December to 4 January, and the current ongoing

National Lockdown. For the Tier 4 period, which ran for ten days immediately after Christmas, affected businesses can apply for the LRSG (Closed) Tier 4 grant scheme. For the current National Lockdown, which started on January 5, three new schemes are now available. The new Local Restrictions Support Grant (5 January onwards covers the current 42-day period for business closures up until 31 March 2021) with one-off payments ranging from £2,001 to £4,500 depending on the rateable value of a business which must have been registered for business rates on 5 January 2021 and required by law to close. Those receiving this grant will also be entitled to an additional one-off Closed Business Lockdown payment for the same 42-day qualifying restriction period which will range from £4,000 to £9,000 and will be paid automatically. If you are aware of any businesses that have been forced to close, please do encourage them to get in touch with the council or myself to access these grants.

**Thakeham Housing proposal:** On 8th December I and other colleagues not in the ruling group found out about the developer's proposals via Thakeham's press release. It has become known that the Leader of the council and the Director of Planning met with the developers on 25th September and the Leader met with the developers again on the 7th December. I have expressed my concern that this information was only shared with members of the ruling group's party, including their party colleagues on other councils, and not to other members such as myself. I have asked that in future I am equally informed given its proximity to our ward and I hope my request is acted on. As this will be deliberated by the local planning authority and most likely to be a consideration in the Local plan, as your councillor and a member of the planning committee, I must be clear that if I were to nail my colours to the mast at this stage, I would have become predetermined and unable to then vote on any applications that come to committee or indeed the local plan itself potentially. What I am able to say at this time is that based on the information provided so far, I fail to be convinced that this proposal is suitable for the district, and that I will not support developments that I consider to be unsuitable or unsustainable across the district.

**Please wash your Bin handles!** Councillors have been asked to encourage residents to wash their dustbin handles.

Cllr Heather Williams  
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#### **Matters Arising:**

**Community Group:** The E-News regarding the new structure of the Group has been sent out, and the first meeting will be held on February 2nd via Zoom, hosted by the village Tree Wardens, on the subject of trees. Tree planting does not just have to take place on public land and subject to landowners' permissions, can be on private land. For more details, do join the meeting!

**Housing Needs:** Nothing further has been heard, but the Chair will make enquiries from Hastoe.

**Website Update:** The Chair and Clerk have managed to upload and place documents on the correct pages, however there is much more to learn! The website has been circulated for comments and possible further tweaking, before going live. The Chair said that a formal thank you to the gentleman currently maintaining the old website will be made when the new site is live.

**Speedwatch:** Still awaiting the appointment of a new Crime Commissioner, after which Cllr Williams will be able to arrange an area meeting.

**Clopton Sign:** The Clerk has discovered who owns the land the sign was previously on and permission has been obtained to reinstate it. One of the wooden bars on the back of the sign was missing, but has been replaced at no cost by a local gentleman.

**Defibrillator:** The defibrillator and cabinet have arrived and quotations are being sought from local electricians for the installation. The Chair has located a company to supply appropriate signage for the kiosk at a total cost of £48-00. The Chair proposed a cheque for this should be raised once the pro-forma invoice is received. All in favour. Further works will be needed on the kiosk once the installation is complete.

**Arrington Parking:** The Clerk and Chair attended an extraordinary Zoom meeting of Arrington PC, the notes from which are below:-

**Notes from the extraordinary Arrington Parish Council meeting held on Monday 11 January 2021 from 6.00pm.**

**Wimpole Hall Parking:** The Chairman gave a brief outline of actions already carried out regarding the extent and incompetence of local parking by visitors to the National Trust property.

Further actions considered were:-

- Publication and consultation on the amount of yellow lineage locally and following 21 days' publication with no objections, then this can be implemented.
- Concern expressed about parking in the Arrington gate entrance; it was suggested that saddle stones and chains could prevent this.
- The bus service will not always use Church Lane as it has been unable to get through the parked vehicles. Because of this, an Arrington resident was dropped off some distance from their home and had to walk the rest of the way.
- Joint letters to relevant people from Arrington, Croydon and Wimpole parish councils.
- The Wimpole Hall website is still advertising free parking and needs to be revised.

Councillor Kindersley made the following observations:-

- If all three parish councils work together the concerns will carry more weight.
- The yellow line publication should cover every area considered, as once permission is given it does not all need to be completed at the same time (although it would be more cost effective if it were).
- The situation has been exacerbated by Covid and restrictions on the number of tickets for entry into the Park. The surrounding areas are jam-packed with "displaced" parking from Wimpole Hall, and no restrictions can be placed on visitors entering the Park from other gates.
- An ultimatum letter needs to be sent to various people within the National Trust network - Cllr Kindersley can advise on this.

Comments from those present:-

- Croydon PC Chair hoped that the yellow lines proposed for Church Lane would not push parking further up the road towards Croydon.
- Croydon residents are concerned that there is not enough room for emergency vehicles to get through to them via Church Lane.
- Concern over funding for the scheme. The National Trust has only funded the consultation, but any remainder could be used towards this.
- Wimpole PC will support the actions regarding parking.

**Next steps:**

Get in touch with APC's contact at CCC and ask for publication of the proposals discussed.

**Flooding:** One of APC's councillors has spoken with Anthony Browne, who was unaware of the flooding on the A1198 at Wimpole Gate.

The Police were asked about traffic lights for the flooding, but declined as no accidents had been reported.

Highways problems need to be reported via the website and not to individuals, who may be on holiday and therefore not replying to their correspondence.

The drains have been jetted last April and again in June. A problem was discovered and the Flood and Waste Team are working on a solution.. Cllr Kindersley has been unable to obtain a contact within this Team, but will chase it up. Cllr Kindersley stated that many Council employees had been deployed to Covid-related positions, which has caused delays elsewhere.

There are likely to be other factors than the run-off from the Solar Farm causing the flooding.

Apparently a condition of the Solar Farm's planning permission was to mitigate against run-off or water trespass. A letter should be sent to the Planners asking if this was done and if not, to make sure that it is.

The Arrington Parish Council meeting closed at 6.30pm.

**Further information:** A letter from Mr David Hassle at Wimpole Park has suggested that visitor numbers are so low that the parking problem cannot possibly be caused by Wimpole Park. The on-road

parking is all "displaced" vehicles, with people unwilling to pay the entry fee to the Park just to walk in the grounds on the public footpaths accessible from the other gates. The placement of the double yellow lines in Arrington will go for publication in local papers and subject to no objections looks like it will go ahead. Wimpole Park are apparently not contributing to the cost of this, and other avenues for funding will need to be investigated.

**Correspondence:**

**Electoral Register:** One alteration has been made to the new Electoral Register already.

**East-West Rail non-statutory Consultation:** Information on the proposed route has been published and details have been circulated to Councillors for comment.

**Sunnica Solar Proposal:** The Clerk had prepared a letter for Councillors to comment on. The Chair read the letter and additions were suggested by those present at the meeting. The Clerk will make these and send the letter out for approval before sending it to Sunnica and copies to the two MPs whose constituencies are involved.

*Dear Sirs*

*Thank you for giving Croydon Parish Council the opportunity to respond on the Sunnica proposal for a new Solar Energy installation on the Cambridgeshire-Suffolk border.*

*While it is unlikely that Croydon would be affected by this development, Council has experience of the process involved in the installation of a solar harvesting site in this village, although on a much smaller scale than the proposed Sunnica site of 2,600 acres. The local disruption in the village for Croydon's small development would doubtless be magnified many times for this huge proposed installation over four sites. Croydon Parish Council therefore objects to this proposal, in support of those parishes that would be most affected, with the reasons listed below:-*

- the intrusive visual appearance into several areas of landscape in open countryside*
- the loss of much useful and productive farmland, particularly important now since leaving the EU*
- disturbing the local habitat and distress caused to the wildlife*
- the amount of traffic and the damage to the roads being used by heavy lorries*
- the noise from the installation (humming) which may cause headaches*
- potential for increase in rainwater run-off, which has contributed to flooding locally*
- suitable natural screening for the site(s)*

*The above reasons are as a direct result of Council's own experiences. Further objections to the proposal are:-*

- the scale of the proposed installation*
- for energy to be truly green, it should not be using green land*
- Council's objection is not to solar panels per se, but the use of prime agricultural land when many building roofs could be utilised for solar generation instead*
- the accessibility of the National Grid is too far from the proposed sites*

*With the Covid situation, Council would expect an application of this significance to be delayed until residents are in a less worrying situation to consider it properly. Council cannot support Sunnica's proposal.*

**New Model Code of Conduct:** The Local Government Association (LGA) recently published the new model councillor code of conduct, which NALC will be considering further, and will continue to engage with the LGA and county associations on guidance and other support.

**Thakeham and GCP:** There has been a lot of concern over the Thakeham proposals, and a campaign against them is already underway. There is a Zoom meeting with Anthony Browne on Thursday 21st January regarding this matter, details of which have been circulated to Councillors. A report on the meeting will be given at the February meeting.

**Foxton Neighbourhood Plan:** The consultation on this has resumed following its suspension during the earlier lockdowns. The Chair has read it and reported that there is nothing of concern to Council contained in the Plan.

**Electronic correspondence:** Has been circulated to Councillors, including subsequent receipts detailed below:-

**Subsequent Receipts:**

**Greater Cambridge Partnership:** There has been a change in the way that tree works will be notified to Parish Councils and Tree wardens. From Monday 11th January to help provide clarity, SCDC Tree Teams will continue to notify parish council/meetings of all S211 tree work notices or TPO tree work applications in their parish but will divide them into two categories - minor and major and send out different letters, as below:-

**Letter One (major tree work cases)**

For all *major* tree work cases (either S211 tree work notices or TPO tree work applications), the Trees Team will send a letter to the Parish Council/meeting. The Parish (or any other person) will have an opportunity to comment - 10 days - on the case should it wish. Comments should be made via the website. All cases considered to be *major* contain one or more of the following:

- crown reductions or pollarding for the first time,
- crown reductions or pollarding beyond previous pruning points,
- thinning or felling,
- front garden, public land or churchyard tree works,
- removal or topping outgrown hedgerows,
- unusual species,
- species/trees which may have historical or cultural meaning to the locality, and/or
- other matters of interest.

These cases require a SCDC Officer to visit the locality to assess the case. The time for comment is limited given the tight overall timeframe for considering these cases. Please note that in general, SCDC will not be able to give extended consultation periods due to the tight timelines involved and the resources available to the Trees Team.

In terms of what comments would be material to the decision, these should relate to the amenity of the tree, the impact of the works on the tree or locality, and with TPO tree work applications how the proposal is not justified or reasonable.

**Letter two (minor tree work cases)**

These relate to minor works (defined below) and will be for your information and to note. For all *minor* tree work cases (either S211 tree work notices or TPO tree work applications), SCDC will look to determine the case immediately. Finalising minor cases will allow the time to focus on those cases which do need more time and consideration. The proposed tree works are considered to be *minor* as they include one or more of the following:

- felling dead/partially failed trees (with proof),
- crown lifting, epicormic or tipping back off lines or structures,
- repeat crown reductions or re-pollarding,
- trees not easily or clearly visible from public places,
- removal or topping evergreen (cypress) hedgerows,
- limited visibility trees such as rear garden trees, and/or
- pruning ornamental or fruit trees such as apples and pears.

This is a similar process that the team currently uses, but we hope the different letters will give greater clarity to those parishes which do not have many tree cases from year to year and/or who do not have a lead spokesperson for parish trees.

Many parish representatives attended the Tree Wardens event 'Pruning Protected Trees' in March 2019 and it is hoped to provide similar training again in February to those who are interested. More details will be released nearer to the time but although the sessions will be remote you will be welcome to attend.

For any questions or queries you may have, please contact [planning.trees@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:planning.trees@scambs.gov.uk)

**Greater Cambridge Partnership:** Site submissions and survey. Clerk cannot forward the email as the link to the survey will be invalid, but it will be completed. If you would like to view the submissions locally that may affect Croydon, the link to the map is below.

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/greater-cambridge-local-plan/document-library/site-submissions/>

**Eastern Community Housing:** Eastern Community Homes is a new Community-Led Housing Hub in the East of England, hosted by Cambridgeshire ACRE and in partnership with the 6 Rural Community Councils (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk). Our aim is to provide advice, support, and practical resources for local community groups in the East of England so they have the skills and capacity to bring forward and deliver affordable homes for local people.

**Mental Health training:** SCDC want to raise awareness of some training they are offering front-line volunteers who may be supporting their residents. The training is being provided by MIND and provides additional information and knowledge around how to support people who are suffering with poor mental health or emotional distress. The course has been designed to:

- Help recognise the signs of emotional distress or mental ill health.
- Focus on practical skills to open up a conversation, provide active listening and next steps for support
- Look after your own wellbeing and create a wellbeing plan
- Support others to create a wellbeing plan and signpost locally.

If this would be of interest to you or if you think one of your volunteers would be keen to take a mental health lead. Please register your interest by following the link: [training@cpslmind.org.uk](mailto:training@cpslmind.org.uk)

**Greater Cambridge Partnership:** The public access to the planning website is being suspended from 5.00pm on 21 January until 9.00am on 26 January. Any planning application consultations out for determination in this timescale will be given an extra 5 days to respond to it.

**Planning:** 20/02656/FUL Installation of secure storage container on land to the north of Manor Farm, Croydon. Permission has been granted for this.

#### **Finance:**

**Bank Statement:** The reimbursement cheque for purchase of the PPE for both the church and Reading Room has been presented for payment. The balance at the end of December is £7804-34.

**Village Christmas Tree:** The Parish Council had been approached regarding the purchase of a Christmas tree for public display outside the Reading Room. Council agreed that up to £40-00 will be included in the 2021-22 precept for this, and all were in favour. One of the Tree Wardens pointed out that a dead tree is not environmentally friendly, so could a live tree be purchased and possibly planted outside the Reading Room. The suggestion regarding the environment was well received by Councillors, but the tree roots could cause damage to the Reading Room footings and drainage, so planting was not a good idea. The Chair suggested a potted rooted tree, which could be placed in front of the Reading Room every November time for decoration and moved elsewhere until the following year. This could continue until the tree grew too big to be moved. A decision will be made in time for Christmas this year.

**Current Website Funding:** It was agreed that the gentleman who has been kindly maintaining the old website for over two years at no cost to Council should be compensated for his actions. The Chair proposed that an ex gratia payment of £200-00 would be appropriate for this. Councillors were all in favour, and this will be actioned at the time the old website is removed.

**Precept:** Councillors had all been sent information regarding the parish financial position. There was discussion over the amount of the rise in the precept, but it was felt necessary in order to meet Council's obligations.

The Chair made the following proposals:

- |             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| • Insurance | £ 450 - 00 |
| • Rent      | £ 200 - 00 |
| • Clerk     | £1475 - 00 |
| • Audit     | £ 40 - 00  |

- Subs £ 60 - 00
- Election £ 200 - 00
- Cemetery and Village £ 600 - 00
- Books and Training £ 50 - 00
- Council/Website £ 250 - 00
- Section 137/Contingency £ 815 - 00

Total precept required for 2021-2022 £4140 - 00

The Chair explained that this amount is actually an increase of 21.7% on previous years, but the real increase is actually only £740-00 on the last precept. It is the percentage makes the increase sound dreadful. Council has always tried to keep the precept as low as possible but some of the account nominals were well below the necessary totals . She suggested that an E-News should be sent before Council Tax bills arrive, to inform the village of the reasons behind the increase. All in favour of the precept and an E-News. The Clerk will send the precept information to SCDC as the closing date is 20 January and permission was obtained to send it in after the meeting.

**Items for next agenda:** The Queen Adelaide

**Date of the next meeting:** Wednesday 17th February 2021 via Zoom.

If you wish to participate in any of the Zoom meetings, please contact the Clerk on [croydonpc@bobburling.plus.com](mailto:croydonpc@bobburling.plus.com) for access information.

As there was no further business, Councillors were thanked for attending and the meeting was declared closed at 8.47pm.

Signed ..... Date .....

