

## **A meeting of Croydon Parish Council was due to be held on Wednesday 15 December 2021 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.**

Due to the current Covid situation, and the lack of permission to hold remote meetings, Councillors made the decision to cancel the meeting.

The following are notes compiled from the headings on the December agenda.

### **Matters Arising:**

**Community Group:** Did not meet in December.

**Christmas Bazaar report:** A very good result from the Bazaar on Saturday 11th with £621 being taken, including a few donations. This is easily the second best result ever and only about £40 less than the highest. About as difficult a build-up as possible when trying to balance community and individual wellbeing versus late changes to government rules coupled with Covid health risks. There was quite a bit of overstretch among helpers on the day and quite a few known non-attendees, all of which is understandable. Comments received have been very favourable about the change to part indoor and covered outdoor, also compliments on the levels of ventilation in the Reading Room, though extra clothing layers were definitely needed! The countdown to the official tree light switch on seemed to work well. Many thanks to all those who supplied vital equipment including gazebos and external lighting, thanks! Well done everyone.

**Village Map:** The Clerk has sourced a map which appears to be the nearest possible to that which the Tree Wardens need. One copy of this will be purchased online for approval, before any further purchases are made.

**Housing Needs:** Nothing to report, although an alternative site has been investigated.

**Speedwatch:** Cllr Williams will update any progress at the next meeting.

**Clopton Sign:** Nothing further to report on this at present.

**Additional Dog Bin:** No report from the group.

**Village Christmas Tree:** This is In place and looking splendid - well done to those involved with this.

**Croydon Hill Closure:** Croydon Hill will be closed to traffic for replacement of a section of water pipes by Anglian Water between January 10<sup>th</sup> and February 18<sup>th</sup> 2022. The work will be taking place in the carriageway rather than the verge. A copy of the Order will be eventually be available on:- [street.works@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:street.works@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

**Licensing Hearing:** Council has been informed that the hearing for the alcohol licence at Clopton Farm has been deferred following the presentation of new evidence. A new date will be issued in due course. Cllr Heather Williams will be representing Croydon Parish Council as previously agreed.

**Written report for December from Cllr Williams** - not received at the time of posting

### **Gamlingay Division Councillors' written report - SCDC and CCC - December 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!

**Roadworks:** With any luck by the time you read this the works at Blythe Way Gamlingay - scheduled for early December - will be complete. Again, fingers crossed that the works to Manor Rd and Murfitt Way footways will be well underway (at a cost of £105,000).

Regarding complaints about the resurfacing in Greenacres Gamlingay I had feedback from Highway officers who advise Micro Asphalt Surface Treatment optimises the use of funds on roads exhibiting the early stages of deterioration. A Surface Treatment seals in the road to prevent water ingress, which causes damage and deteriorations; it improves the texture and grip of the surface, and in addressing such issues, extends the life of the existing road surface. It will also restore texture and grip to the road, and this is why it cannot be a perfectly smooth surface, as it would provide no skid resistance. One of the features of this product is that it does look rough and messy for several months after it is laid. This is perfectly normal for this process, and as the road continues to embed, it will take on a more regular appearance over time. So rather than the surface deteriorating, I would expect it to improve as time passes. In the early stage of its life, it is also susceptible to 'dry steer' marks. This is the

action of power steering turning on the spot as a vehicle moves slowly. Again, this will reduce and improve over time as the road settles. It will of course be inspected again.

The railway bridge on New Road between Hatley and Fuller's Hill appears to be failing which implies the recent works have not been done well. Officers are inspecting and will take this up with the bridge owners. It's important as Hatley residents will need this road a lot in the Spring as Croydon Hill will be shut. There will also be repairs to the collapsed culvert at West Lodge, Hatley.

Considerable public disquiet at the six week proposed closure of Croydon Hill which is not surprising. Cambridge Water say it is unavoidable but that if in the course of works they can light it instead they will. As part of a rolling programme of mains improvement, they will be replacing the existing water mains in the Main Street/Croydon Hill area in East Hatley with a high-performance polyethylene water main. Work is due to start on 10 January 2022 approximately six weeks.

There will be updates about the work on our website at <https://www.cambridge-water.co.uk/hatley>.

The County Council currently produces a 3 year programme of capitably funded highway maintenance work which I have asked officers to review in the light of potential resurfacing of the road once works are completed. They will visit the site and compare it with those currently planned, along with some other suggestions across the County and will advise further following a review of the condition data and site inspection as well as central government grant allocation as yet unknown. Fingers crossed.

Alongside the major works to be done on Church Street Guilden Morden costing £147,000 I have been advised that Cannon's Close will be resurfaced next year as well as Craft Way in Steeple Morden.

**Household Support Fund:** Cambridgeshire's Household Support Fund, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, has been created to help people experiencing immediate financial hardship to pay for food, household energy or other essential items. The scheme will run until 31 March 2022.

Support is offered in two ways:

- Support with food, household energy and other essentials for individuals and families: residents are eligible to access this support if they earn less than £17,940 per year, or are in receipt of certain state benefits
- Direct food voucher scheme: as in previous school holidays, supermarket vouchers will be issued to families meeting the low income criteria for free school meals, funded childcare for two-year-olds, early years pupil premium, or sixth form students eligible for free school meals.

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/household-support-fund](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/household-support-fund)

**Springs in Wendy:** Anyone driving through Wendy will have noticed (aside from the smart new speed cameras) slight flooding on the road by the Village Hall. This is caused by a spring. Various efforts over the years have been made to reduce water on the highway including backfilling as a French Drain and none have worked. Highways' preferred option is to construct a chamber in the verge with a metal grating on top to collect the spring water. This will do away with the need for gravel and should provide a more reliable long term fix. The problem with this is that it costs more money and that's in short supply at the moment so it would need to wait until the next financial year. It is currently barriered off while the search for funding continues.

**Downing Gardens Gamlingay:** Bridget has asked Morris Homes if there is any way to reduce the noise from reversing vehicles which is impacting on those living close by. In addition, she has queried the reopening of the footpath between Greenacres and Green End as this is an important way for people to get to the shops, children to school etc

**New Golden Number:** South Cambs DC has introduced a single Golden Number to be used to contact the council. This should help you to be able to talk to the best person within the council more effectively. We have also introduced a call back facility so that you don't have to hang on the phone during busy periods. The number is: 01954 713000.

**COP26:** Bridget was honoured to be asked to attend COP26 in Glasgow last month and an opportunity to really see history in the making. She went as part of a Local Government Association delegation whose job it was to ensure that the final deal included the important role of local government including parish councils in getting us to Zero Carbon as quickly as possible. It is within the powers of local government (parish, district and county) to reduce our carbon emissions by 30% so it is vital that we have the powers and the money to be able to do this.

**Primary Health Care:** We know it can be frustrating not being able to see a GP face to face. We are going to have to get used to different ways of accessing primary health care - it will not return to the way it was pre Covid. GPs surgeries are dealing with a 25% increase in their workload. This is a

consequence of Covid and the build-up of untreated cases. It seems a long time ago that we were clapping all of our NHS and we must not forget that they have saved thousands of lives and worked in the most terrible circumstances without a break. They are exhausted and we must continue to be kind to them. There are far too many stories about GPs, nurses and reception staff being abused and threatened. That's not right.

**COVID:** As we write our numbers are still rising and we are now designated as an Enhanced Response area by Government. We are 27% above the national average with some very serious 'hot spots' close by, with a peak in January expected. Booster jabs are now available to all over 40s and children aged 16 and 17 can now get their second dose.

Please think carefully about attending any public event in places that are not well ventilated and to wear a mask and avoid physical contact whenever possible. Matters are in our own hands and if we keep on doing the right thing, test twice a week, get your jab, wear a mask, then cases will begin to flatten out but that will take time.

**Finance and Audit:** Recent comment on the South Cambs Audit process has been muddled. South Cambs finances are in good health and it is one of just 5 councils in the country not facing a budget shortfall which is tremendous. The Council is continuing to improve its accounting systems and deal with problems inherited from the previous administration.

It has however taken significantly longer than the Council expected to transfer 12,000 records on the council's fixed assets from the hopeless old system of spreadsheets used by the previous administration to the new robust system that's designed and managed by CIPFA.

**Chucking old Tech?:** Many of our children and families in need are missing opportunities because they don't have access to digital devices. The County Council is partnering with @cambsyouthpanel and @cambridge2030 to refurbish and donate essential technology to families in need. If you're buying new tech this winter, please consider donating your old and unwanted devices. Visit <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/computers-for-families-campaign-kicks-off-with-arm-donation> to find out how you can help. Plus it's good for the planet!

**Gamlingay First School:** There has been a lot of social media comment about the First School site. Cambridgeshire County Council owns the entire site. How it got ownership is of historical interest only and does not affect the ownership. Senior officers have undertaken that the Playing Field will be accessible for community use. Locally we have made it clear that we would prefer the building to continue in educational use. Officers have taken this on board and are awaiting the results of a Special Education Needs Review across the county to see if a role could be found within that review. Ideally, we would want it to be combined with a pre-school setting like the Montessori which is in a portacabin with only temporary planning permission. The Green End frontage is in very poor condition and is likely to be expensive to refurbish for education so – given the Listed status – residential might be an option here. However, the County Council did submit the entire site for consideration for development in the current Local Plan and it was not accepted by South Cambs.

We understand the frustrations around this site (not least the rubbish and rats) but we also want it to continue as a key part of Gamlingay's community life. There is about £330k available for the provision of pre-school facilities from Green End and West Road S106 agreements so that helps!

**Innovate & Cultivate Fund:** The County Council's next deadline for Innovate & Cultivate Fund applications is 1st February 2022. The aim of the fund is to support initiatives that strengthen our communities and reduce pressure on County Council services, thereby giving a return on investment. Council services that are inviting applications are adult social care and children's services.

The fund is open to voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations based in and outside of Cambridgeshire, and public sector organisations in Cambridgeshire. This funding round is for Cultivate grant applications (£2,000-£15,000) for projects that build community support networks for vulnerable people. Organisations need to get pre-application advice on their project ideas before submitting an application.

Do you want to do something for the community but need some inspiration to start a project? We've developed application guidance for 7 Cultivate project ideas - Mobile Warden Schemes, Community Youth Worker, Digital Inclusion, Timebanks, Good Neighbour Schemes, Dementia-Friendly Communities and Men's Sheds - that can help people to remain independent and active within their community, encourage volunteering, and complement more costly Council services. Applications and further information about fund priorities and criteria may be found on the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation (CCF) website.

**Free Trees Scheme:** This year's Free Tree Scheme has been a success with applications from over 70 parish councils who could choose between 6 small trees or one whopper - so this year a total of 420 new trees will be planted.

**Waste:** South Cambs won a grant to run a trial scheme aimed at reducing waste by helping to take back packaging thereby reducing what goes into landfill. We have a further grant to set up centres for recycling electrical goods. So I will be taking all those broken phones (including the one I put in a hot wash last month) along with all the old radios/TVs. The council has also produced a toolkit for parishes on ways to reduce residents' waste. In Gamlingay, of course, we are at a huge advantage having the Food Hub which is proving to be more and more successful as each week goes by. As well as reducing food waste into land fill they also provide food for an ever increasing number of families for whom life is tough at the moment. Do pop in to see what additional donations they need so that you can help them to do even more.

**Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority:** Bridget leads on the environment for the CPCA and has been putting together the work plan for the newly created Climate Working Group. This group will be responsible for creating an action plan out of the recommendations of the Climate Commission. The main focus is on reducing carbon emissions but also on reducing waste, creating more open green spaces with public access and making our homes more energy efficient and therefore cheaper to run.

**Visit South Cambridgeshire:** The new Visit South Cambs website is now up and running. Please use it if you would like to discover new places to visit, eat, for shopping. If you are a food outlet, B& B or pub please do put your details on the website so that we can help you to grow your business.

**Business Support:** South Cambs is unusual for a district council in that it is heavily involved in supporting local businesses through the regular newsletter and a programme of webinars and events. No business is too small or too big to benefit and I am very pleased that so many Gamlingay businesses are benefitting from the support the council gives.

**Speed Limit:** The County Council intends to extend the 40mph speed limit on Potton Road, Mill Hill (B1040), Gamlingay from a point 320 metres south west of its junction with Meadow Lane in a south westerly direction for a distance of 160 metres. The proposed 40mph speed limit has been proposed to lower vehicle speed to accommodate a new footpath and dropped kerb crossing to encourage sustainable travel methods. This scheme is being funded by the Local Highway Improvement Initiative (LHI) following the successful submission of an LHI application made by Gamlingay Parish Council. Hurrah!

**New County Chief Executive:** Cambridgeshire County Council has appointed Stephen Moir as its new chief executive after the decision was agreed by Full Council on Tuesday (9 November). Stephen will join the County Council in February. Bringing significant public sector leadership experience, Stephen has held senior roles in local government and the national health service, he has previously worked for Cambridgeshire County Council between 2005-2011 at director level and was a National Adviser for the Local Government Association. He is currently Executive Director of Corporate Services for the City of Edinburgh Council.

**Treasure!:** You may have seen reports about a treasure find 'near Royston' of prehistoric items found in September during a metal detecting rally held on fields locally. A teenager found a number of Bronze Age objects. With assistance from the organisers, she and her family started to dig these out until the organiser realised that this was a likely to be a hoard with many objects. Therefore they stopped digging and a local archaeological contractor that we work closely with was involved.

By the end of the week a second hoard had been found and a total of nearly 200 objects lifted, dating mainly from the mid-late Bronze Age. The hoards were buried in an ancient ditch line and are likely the same hoard, divided for burial, presumably in case of discovery. This is one of the most important treasure finds from Cambridgeshire in recent years.

Ideally, a local museum will express an interest in acquiring it, in which case a panel called the Treasure Valuation Committee will determine a price for the museum to pay. The proceeds of such an acquisition are usually split 50:50 between finder and landowner.

**Happy Christmas:** May we take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and we look forward to a prosperous and safe New Year 2022.

Your Councillors are here to help you. Please do feel free to contact us with comments, questions, problems or complaints. Please do not hesitate to contact County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley on 01767 651982 or [skindersley@hotmail.com](mailto:skindersley@hotmail.com) or write to the Manor Barn, East Hatley, SG19 3JA . We hope we can help but if we can't, we are likely to know someone who can!

**Correspondence:**

**Electoral Register:** Clerk has received a new register. It is available for inspection, but copies cannot be made.

**Greater Cambridge Local Plan Consultation:** Clerk has responded on behalf of the Council. Every comment was confirmed by an email - Clerk's inbox is quite full!

**Travel in Cambridge and Peterborough:** This closed on Sunday 28 November.

**SCDC PC Liaison Meeting:** The minutes for this meeting have been circulated to Councillors.

**Anthony Browne - Congestion Charge Consultation:** Links for this were circulated and it is hoped that Councillors gave their opinions.

**Gliding Club Minutes:** These have been circulated to Councillors.

**Luton Airport:** The modified flight paths have been confirmed despite a great deal of opposition, and will be reviewed in a year's time.

**SCDC Communities Covid Update:** Circulated to Councillors, and pieces sent out to the parish via Mailchimp.

**Highway Events Diary:** Circulated to Councillors - there is nothing of note happening locally.

**Subsequent receipts:**

**Cambs Local Councils Conference:** This is to be held virtually on 14th January 2022 from 10.00am until 4.00pm. Chair and Clerk are attending, and Clerk will send details on registering if any Councillor is interested in attending.

**Community Led Plan:** A grant of up to £2000 is available to create or refresh the Plan. This was discussed by Council at a previous meeting and was not felt to be necessary, as there are actions from the current plan still to be addressed.

**Fews Lane Consortium:** Apparently a member of the Consortium has been making allegations that the District Council is not acting appropriately and in line with its Constitution. These allegations have been explained and dismissed by SCDC, and the information received has been circulated to Councillors.

**Covid Communities Update:** Asking for volunteers to assist with the vaccination programme. If you are interested, contact the Clerk for details. Training will be provided for vaccinators (paid roles) and there are voluntary roles for marshalling and administration,

**SLCC:** Reported that Lawyers in Local Government and the Association of Democratic Services Officers have called on the Government to restore the ability of councils to meet remotely in England and Wales while Covid is rife.

**Finance:**

**Bank Statement:** November statement will be presented to the next meeting.

**SLCC:** Clerk has received an invoice for the total of £70-00 for her annual subs to this association. This will be presented at the next meeting, as Council has been kind enough to fund this for many years.

**Date of the next meeting:**

Wednesday 19 January 2022 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm . Any necessary Covid precautions that Council feels necessary will be in place.

Presented instead of  
minutes and signed .....

Date .....