

## **A meeting of Croydon Parish Council was held on Wednesday 21st September 2022 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.**

At the start of the meeting, Councillors stood for a one minute silence to commemorate the life and service of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

**Apologies:** Mr Wheeler - unwell, Mrs Sole - working late, Cllr Kindersley - Council business.

**Present:** Mr Barnes, Mr Sole, Ms Newland, Mr Buchanan, Mr Wenman, Cllr Williams, the Clerk and 2 members of public.

**Minutes:** Minutes of the July meeting previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

**Declarations of Interest:** None received.

### **Matters Arising and Village Issues:**

**Death of Queen Elizabeth II:** The Clerk received a protocol of 32 pages with instructions following the death of a "senior member of the Royal Household". Much of this was irrelevant for a small Parish, but Council placed a tribute on the village website and a tribute was placed in the Book of Condolence on behalf of the village. These are both available to view on the village website:-

<https://croydon-village.co.uk>

**Community Reports:** The Car Show was a resounding success, and the organisers would like to thank everyone who was involved in it. The total raised is not yet available, but around £7500 was taken on the day with expenses to be taken out from this. This is the highest amount raised in the Car Show's history. The organisers felt it had become as big as Croydon could be, with the number of cars and people. Social media was very helpful for attracting the classic vehicles. The Team was meeting to further discuss when the next show should be - usually held in July but pushed back to September because of Covid and the Jubilee. Next June/July may be when the coronation of King Charles is held, so careful thought would be given to the timing. At the meeting, Council received a letter from the Team thanking them for their support of the event.

**Tractor Run:** This was held on 17th September, less than a week after the Car Show. Twenty-five tractors gathered in the Show field with a commentary of each one's history, before making their way down Croydon High Street and down Larkins Road. The route covered all five parishes in the Benefice and finished at Barrington Green. The monies raised from collections in the field and en route will be divided between the five churches in the Benefice. It was reported that this event was likely to be held again, but in April/May next year.

**Litter Pick/ Dog/Litter Bin signs:** Mr Buchanan confirmed that the signs have been made and are ready for the next litter pick. He was asked to thank the person responsible for the signs, as there is no charge for them. He is awaiting information from the Dog Bin Focus group for the signs needed for the bin locations.

**Speedwatch:** No new volunteers have come forward and there are not enough volunteers to go ahead with the scheme. The Chairman reiterated that before Council can install a flashing speed sign, there has to be evidence that one is needed. If there is no Speedwatch, there will be no data collected and therefore no evidence.

**London Luton Flight Paths:** Following many complaints from the village, Council has managed to secure a meeting with the representatives from the airport. The meeting will be held in the Reading Room on Wednesday 12th October at 7.30pm. The representatives will speak and answer questions afterwards. The Clerk produced a poster for the event, which was approved by Council, and will be put onto the notice board, website and circulated by Mailchimp.

**Gmail addresses:** Councillors are working on setting up gmail addresses for Council use, and in case of a Freedom of Information request. It was suggested that each Councillor's initials followed by Croydon PC@gmail.com would be sufficient. As soon as all Councillors confirm that this has been done, the Clerk will replace the distribution list currently in use with gmail addresses.

**Street Cleaning Machine:** Cllr Williams was asked to find out if SCDC has a mechanical cleaner that would fit along some of Croydon's footways, to save the litter pick team doing this and allowing them time to complete other tasks. Cllr Williams had been unable to find one narrow enough, but will check out an alternative. She reported that Council would collect any rubbish collected during a litter pick.

**Potential Fire Risks:** Following several nearby field fires, some residents of the High Street were concerned about the possibility of this happening locally, nearby to their homes. Council sent a letter to all farmers with land in the parish about this. Only one reply was received, but since the rain, the risk has reduced.

**Comberton School Bus:** This service is a double decker bus, and will not use Croydon High Street as part of its route, due to overhanging trees. This has been reported to Cllr Kindersley, who will pass the information on to the appropriate colleague in the County Council.

**East West Rail:** A meeting was arranged for 9th September at Haslingfield Village Hall. The Clerk drove over to find that the meeting had been cancelled due to the death of Her Majesty. There was no publicity or email to indicate that this had been done. Councillor Williams was frustrated that a letter in support of the scheme was signed by Cllr Bridget Smith on behalf of South Cambs District Council, along with many other local dignitaries, and Council had no knowledge of this.

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

**Bins:** Following a threatened strike over pay by the bin men, the Council's pay offer was accepted, so this was avoided.

**4 day week:** South Cambs District Council may be trialling this in January next year. This is in an effort to recruit and retain staff - based on the 100 - 80 -100 system. 100% of the work in 80% of the time for 100% of the pay. This is reported at length in her written report.

Councillor Williams reported that the other items of interest from the District Council were covered in her summer, and September reports.

### **District Councillor Williams' written reports to the meeting:**

#### **Summer 2022 report**

#### **Recycle small electricals**

Recycling small electricals like toasters, phones and hairdryers is easier for local people after more drop-off points were installed.

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service, a partnership between Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, has placed eight new pink collection banks for small electrical items at recycling points, with more locations planned.

In the Greater Cambridge area, figures from the RECAP waste partnership show that an average of 450 tonnes of small electrical equipment is disposed of in black bins every year, ending up in landfill where it will never break down and harms the environment.

Where are the new recycling banks for small electricals?

- Gwydir Street car park, Cambridge
- Lammas Land car park, Cambridge
- Abbey Pool car park, Cambridge
- Chesterton Road public toilets, Cambridge
- Morrisons car park, Cambourne
- Tesco car park, Bar Hill
- Village car park, High Street, Melbourn
- Tesco car park, Fulbourn

There are existing banks at Glebe Farm Drive, Fawcett Road and Hawkey Road in Cambridge, as well as Milton and Thriplow Household Recycling Centres. Small appliances can also be handed in for recycling in-store at Curry's on Newmarket Road in Cambridge.

What kind of small electrical items can I recycle?

Anything up to 29cm in its largest dimension, which has a plug, battery or cable. If batteries are removable, take these out and recycle them separately. Some examples of suitable items include:

- Kettles, toasters, sandwich toasters, stick blenders
- Games consoles, DVD players
- Hand-held vacuum cleaners, electric toothbrushes
- Mobile phones, tablets and smart devices
- Cables and headphones
- Printers and scanners
- Laptops, keyboards and IT accessories

Please note that smoke detectors, light bulbs, e-cigarettes, batteries, paints, chemicals or aerosols are not accepted in these banks.

### **Fine issued for fly tipping**

Recently a family in South Cambs were fined £550 for being responsible for fly-tipping within Milton. This was following them paying someone to remove waste from their residential property. The judge in this case was clear that the relevant paperwork had not been given the relevant due diligence, thus a fine was issued. Often, if someone offers to remove your waste for a very low fee, with no paperwork, it is too good to be true and you could end up being fined in the long run. I would strongly encourage residents to check before allowing people to take away their rubbish, advice can be found on the link below.

[Waste carriers, brokers and dealers \(data.gov.uk\)](https://data.gov.uk)

### **Safer communities fund**

A new Safer Communities Fund has been launched by the Police and Crime Commissioner Darryl Preston where Community Safety Partnerships in the county will be able to bid for up to £5000 for initiatives which will provide swift responses to crimes such as fly-tipping, bike theft, road safety and anti-social behaviour.

### **Community Payback Scheme**

This scheme is to encourage members of the public to nominate potential projects for the community payback scheme. The Government's scheme allows members of the public to suggest what unpaid work is carried out by offenders in their area.

"Community payback is a punishment that is visible to the public," Darryl Preston said. "It is designed to rehabilitate people on probation while giving back to the local area harmed by their crime."

Payback teams around the country have been making a difference in their communities from clearing graffiti to re-decorating community centres. Darryl Preston has visited The Green Backyard in Peterborough, a community garden which has been cleared and maintained during the pandemic by Community Payback Teams.

"In my Police and Crime Plan I pledged to work with partners to tackle re-offending and the community payback scheme does that," Darryl added. "I am keen that the unpaid work carried out by offenders benefits our community. Nobody knows the needs of the area more than local people and I am therefore appealing to you to propose local projects."

Courts will order an individual to carry out community payback in cases whereby the offender can be better rehabilitated in the community. This can include first time offenders or where health issues have been an influencing factor.

To be considered the work must benefit the local community, not take paid work away from others and not make a profit. Nominations can be made on the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/nominate-community-payback-project>

**Council launches online toolkit to help villages to set up markets** This toolkit will hopefully provide guidance and inspire villages to consider local markets within their village. Markets are a great way to bring communities together, promote local produce and businesses.

[Market Toolkit - South Cambs District Council \(scambs.gov.uk\)](https://scambs.gov.uk)

### **New Interim Chief Executive Officer appointed at the Combined Authority**

The Combined Authority Board held on Monday 27th June approved the recommendation from the Employment Committee to appoint Gordon Mitchell as the interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO). I am pleased to see that a new CEO has been appointed, as it is important to have leadership at the top of the Combined Authority. It is clear to me that there are problems at the Combined Authority that need addressing asap. The following letter was sent to the Combined Authority at the end of last month indicating that funding will be stopped unless relevant plans are put in place to show that the money is being spent wisely and the relevant due diligence has been carried out.

*"As you know, we are aware of issues regarding the governance and leadership capacity within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) which have prompted your external auditors to write to the Chair of CPCA's Audit and Governance Committee setting out a series of concerns. While CPCA has now formally approached the Department for assistance in driving improvements in these areas, we will be taking a precautionary approach to the transfer of funding to CPCA until we have assurance that there are appropriate plans in place to reach a resolution. In the first instance, the Department will therefore be pausing the payment of 2022/23 Mayoral Capacity Funding and 2022/23 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Core Funding to CPCA.*

*If you consider that the pause poses any financial risk to the authority, or its local investments, then you should advise the area team at the earliest instance, who will work with you to understand the issues and to identify potential mitigations.”*

To see a copy of the external auditors report for the Combined Authority click the link below.

[Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority - VFM Significant Risk Letter \(cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk)

### **£4 million funding plan to boost numeracy skills**

I am pleased to see the Combined Authority allocating £4 million funding through Multiply, a £559m Government-funded initiative aiming to transform the lives of hundreds of thousands of adults across the UK through adult numeracy programmes, boosting confidence to help support people's careers and wider life skills.

The £4m funding will run for three years and is subject to Government approval of a plan being developed by the Combined Authority to help tailor the Multiply offer specifically for the region. The plan will contribute to The Combined Authority's wider skills strategy to build a better skilled workforce to improve lives and wellbeing, support employers' needs, and to attract more national and global investment into the area.

Improving numeracy skills helps people unlock new job or training opportunities, achieve higher wages and support with everyday living like bills and budgeting or helping children with homework. Developing better life skills at work and home can create a better sense of wellbeing and overall quality of life.

### **Strike action threatened by South Cambs Bin workers**

Unfortunately like many others we found out from the press that strike action was being threatened at South Cambs over an 'insulting' pay offer. A link to the article is below, I have raised concerns about this with senior officers at the council and will feed back any updates in due course.

[South Cambridgeshire bin workers threaten strike over pay after receiving 'insulting' offer - Cambridgeshire Live \(cambridge-news.co.uk\)](https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk)

## **September Report**

### **Passing of Her Majesty The Queen**

It was a day we were dreading when operation London Bridge would be enacted. Her Majesty the Queen has been a huge part of all our lives, for most of us she is the only monarch we have ever known. There are no words to describe this unique sense of sorrow that we are left with. The Queen was our monarch, our head of state, Defender of the Faith, head of the commonwealth, and Colonel in Chief of our armed forces. So many roles that Her Majesty managed seamlessly and with grace. Her Majesty the Queen was the finest public servant we have ever known, an exemplary role model for those like us who seek to serve our communities. The Elizabethan age that we have had the honour to live in has seen much change, advancement and progress but the reassurance that our Queen provided remained constant throughout. Her Majesty has shown leadership in so many crucial periods of concern and worry for her peoples, from World War 2, reassuring evacuees and learning to be a mechanic through to the recent pandemic. For the last year Her Majesty the Queen has continued to serve us without the support of His Royal Highness the Prince Philip by her side who the Queen affectionately referred to as her strength and stay, it has been Her Majesty that has been our strength and stay for all these years. Our thoughts and prayers are with the whole royal family especially with His Majesty King Charles as he now must follow in the footsteps of his mother; what an example she has set and may her legacy live on for many years and generations to come.

During the mourning period essential meetings such as planning and cabinet have continued but less essential meetings have been postponed. As there has been a bank holiday for the Queen's funeral, bin collections will be a day later than usual.

### **4 day week**

At Cabinet this month a decision was made to trial officers working 4days instead of 5days a week. Officers will be expected to do the same amount of work but within 4days and will receive 100% of their current pay. This trial is due to start in January to March with the potential to be extended. This will only apply to desk based staff like planning but not to services such as waste bin collection. South Cambs will be the first local council that trials this scheme. The reasons for trying this has been given by cabinet to increase productivity and help with recruitment. Currently the Council has only been able to fill around eight out of every ten (or fewer) of its vacancies. Between January and March 2022, only around half were filled. There are currently 23 agency staff covering office-based roles, which should ideally be filled by people in permanent positions. I have previously raised recruitment and staff moral issues at the

council and normally been dismissed so one positive is that the council is recognising that there is a problem. However I am not positive about the proposed trial, The report to cabinet refers to potential benefits but would require hard working, already stretched employees to get 100% of their work done in 80% of the time. I simply don't believe that that our officers are wasting 20% of their time, and if they are it is an admission of poor oversight by the administration. To be reducing man hours at a time where the administration is struggling to finalise accounts on time and have planning back logs is in my mind absurd. We need more officers, more collective working hours, and more support for our staff - not cuts. At the cabinet meeting I raised a series of questions, some of which were answered but I have strongly raised my objection to this decision being made by council alone as this means on an issue that affects all residents that only 8 out of 45 councillors have had a say in this, meaning that the residents of 37 councillors have had no fair say in this decision. I have also expressed my unhappiness that the national press was briefed about this proposal before staff at the council, whom this affects and residents who are paying for this. Time will tell if this will work, but to be making such an experiment with taxpayers money at this time seems wholly inappropriate.

#### **Money Helper - new Government website**

Given inflation as it is and energy costs rising, the Government has set up a website called Money Helper with huge amounts of information on all things money related. Such as:

- Benefits
- Family and care
- Money troubles
- Savings
- Everyday money
- Homes
- Pensions and Retirement
- Work

The website is really easy to use and has lots of links to other organisations and applications for benefits grants etc. It also has calculators, helplines and a live chat functions on the website. If you are aware of anyone that this would help please do pass this on. A link is provided below.

<https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en>

#### **Strike action threatened by South Cambs Bin workers**

Previously I have reported on the dispute over pay offers at the Greater Cambridge Waste Service. I'm pleased to report that the unions and the council have agreed on a pay settlement and that strike action is no longer being threatened as part of the negotiations.

#### **Congestion Charging**

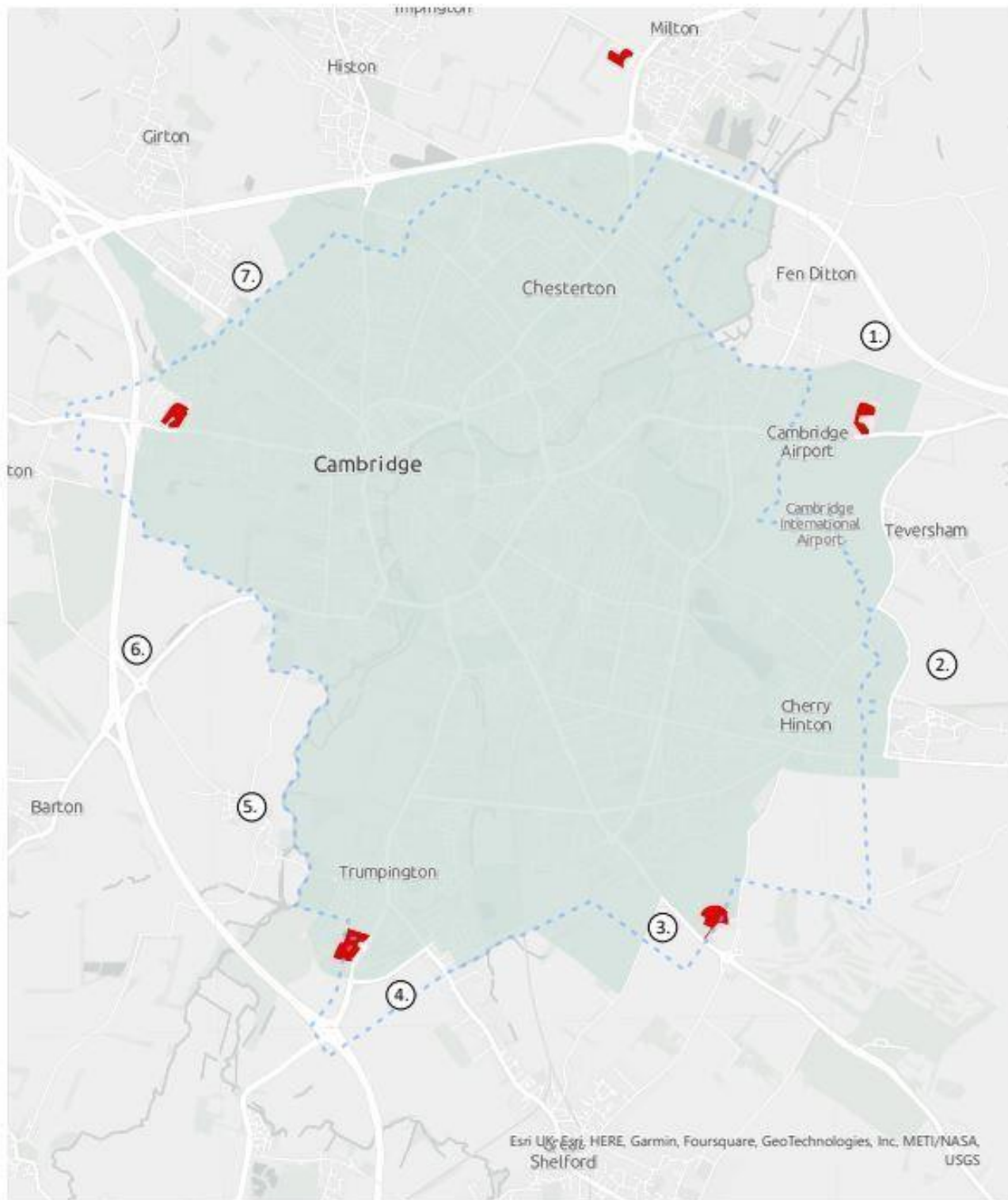
The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Board are meeting on the 28th of this month and will be discussing pursuing the introduction of congestion charging and starting another consultation on the matter. I sit on the GCP Assembly and have spoken against this many times, myself and colleagues have written to the board, brought motions at full council to oppose it all of which have been voted down or ignored. I've included on the next page a map that shows the proposed area for charging is essentially the whole of Cambridge and parts of South Cambridgeshire including Addenbrookes and Papworth Hospital. The cost could add over £1,000 to commuters travel costs and charge people visiting loved ones at Addenbrookes.

The money from this charge will go towards subsidising buses, and while of course I welcome better bus provision I cannot agree that buses alone will provide anywhere near the reliable, affordable and comprehensible public transport network that would be needed to justify such a charge.

While I am opposed to such a charge there are many voices in support also, this is why it is so important that when the consultation is opened that all have their voices heard and I will do all I can to ensure residents know how they can take part and any support from Parish Councils and Parish Chairman in promoting the consultation would be greatly appreciated.

Cllr Heather Williams  
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## Map showing proposed area for the Congestion Charge



-  Potential Turnaround Location
-  Potential Sustainable Travel Zone
-  Cambridge - South Cambridgeshire Boundary
-  Existing Park & Ride Locations

1. High Ditch Road - potential need for traffic management measures
2. Gazelle Way and Yarrow Road - outside zone to maintain access to strategic road network from Fulbourn via Airport Way
3. Granham's Road / Hinton Way - height restriction to consider for re-routing traffic
4. Addenbrooke's Access Road - outside zone to maintain access to the strategic road network from the Shelfords
5. Non-Grantchester traffic can turn at M11 J12 (advanced signing)
6. Approach to Barton Road - turning facility location proposed at J12 roundabout via advanced signing
7. Thornton Close - potential for no-through road restrictions at Huntingdon Road

County Cllr Kindersley sent a written report to the meeting:-

The Gamlingay Division comprises the Parishes of Abington Pigotts, Arrington, Barrington, Croydon, Gamlingay, Guilden Morden, Litlington, Hatley, Orwell, Shingay-cum-Wendy, Steeple Morden, Tadlow & 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!

**Ukraine Guests:** How brilliant the generosity and compassion of South Cambs residents is that we have more guests here from the Ukraine than any other district in the country. We celebrated this on 25th August as part of Ukraine Independence Day by flying the national flag at South Cambs Hall and with a press release showing art works by some of our young guests which made it onto the BBC website. South Cambridgeshire communities have done an immense amount to make our guests welcome from planting their national flower - the sun flower - as a demonstration of solidarity; to running coffee mornings, offering lifts, English lessons and so much more. Thank you to all of you.

**Cost of Living:** Every one of us is beginning to feel the pinch of the cost of living crisis. The South Cambs magazine this month has a 2 page pullout of information that we hope will help as well as website content signposting residents to support available – such as with energy bills or ensuring residents check what they are entitled to (whether it be Universal Credit, help with childcare costs, Disability and Carers benefits etc) and then encouragement to claim entitlements – especially focused on Local Council Tax support and Discretionary Housing payment.

Support is also available from our partner agency, Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency. This includes highlighting grant funding available to replace a boiler for a homeowner whose health is impacted by a lack of warmth and is eligible for a grant because the existing one doesn't work or doesn't work as well as it should.

**City Access Consultation:** A 'Sustainable Travel Zone' road user charge has been put forward by Greater Cambridge Partnership for private vehicles between 7am and 7pm on weekdays. The plans are part of a package to deliver improvements to public transport, reduce congestion in the city, and to help the environment through lower emissions. The proposals follow the Partnership's 'Making Connections' consultation, which the authority said showed the public was supportive of improvements to the public transport network, as well as its aims to reduce pollution and congestion.

A £5 congestion charge to drive into and around Cambridge is being considered as part of a "once in a generation" plan to shake up how people travel between 7am and 7pm on weekdays.

While driving in the city could get more expensive, the GCP has revealed plans to make buses cheaper. Flat fares have been proposed to be introduced; in Cambridge a ticket could cost £1 to travel in the city, with a ticket in the wider 'travel to work' area proposed to cost £2.

There is to be further public consultation following the adoption of the plan on September the 8<sup>th</sup> (or not). What will this mean for residents? Hopefully an hourly bus service and improved park and ride facilities; and initial mapping shows a through bus link from Cambridge to Biggleswade with stops at Gamlingay included; as well as a number of other routes to Bassingbourn and the Mordens.

**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) & Gamlingay First School:** Cambridgeshire County Council continues to need to manage the growing budget, overspend and numbers of Education Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) for children and young people with higher levels of special educational needs and disabilities.

In 2016/17 3,429 Cambridgeshire pupils had EHCPs; in 2021/22 the figure was 6,100. The deficit in 'high needs' spending was £39.3M last year, and is projected to grow to £93.2M by 2025/26 if left unchecked. Government regulations mean that the Council cannot divert funding from other sources to fill this gap.

Cambridgeshire is not the only authority in this situation, and the Department for Education has introduced a 'safety valve' mechanism for those authorities most severely affected. Cambridgeshire has now been invited to participate in the third round of this 'safety valve' programme.

This involves the authority entering into an agreement with the DfE to reform its high needs systems to reduce costs and return 'high needs' spending to balance as quickly as possible. Only when the Government is satisfied that a sustainable local plan is in place to reduce the deficit will it consider any national funding support towards the deficit.

Why does this matter? It is this sustainable local plan which will include the use of the First School in Gamlingay to educate over 100 students currently educated in expensive and/or out of county placements. Preparatory work is underway with a Heritage Assessment which has raised a query as to why (extremely unusually) it was the London School Board that built the school back in 1909. Does anyone know?

**South Cambs Leading the way....:** A three-month trial of a four-day week could begin in January for desk-based staff at South Cambridgeshire District Council – as a similar pilot of over 3,300 staff continues at more than 70 UK organisations. People now think differently about work-life priorities; nationally and locally it is harder than ever to recruit and retain staff.

If Cabinet members agree to the trial, the Council will closely monitor what impact it has on services for residents and businesses. These service levels cannot drop if a four-day week is to be considered as a viable option in the longer term.

To monitor service levels during the trial, the Council would use its standard set of statistics which are regularly updated. These keep a check on things like how long it takes the Council to process benefits claims, Council house rent collections, how fast planning applications are determined, staff turnover, call answering times and more. Industry-standard health and wellbeing surveys will also be used to measure success and be compared against the results from a survey carried out last month (August 2022) before the four-day week trial was announced to staff.

For more than a year, the Council has only been able to fill around eight out of every ten (or fewer) of its vacancies. Between January and March 2022, only around half were filled. There are currently 23 agency staff covering office-based roles, which should ideally be filled by people in permanent positions. Over a whole year, these agency staff could cost the Council more than £2million. If the Council filled all these posts with permanent staff, it would only cost around £1million per year.

Not being able to fill vacant posts – or switching between agency staff to cover them – is also disruptive to services for residents. For example, when case officers change during the process of a planning application, it can cause delays and frustration because a lot of context and institutional memory is lost.

This has led to the Council looking at the viability of a four-day week through a proposed trial between January and March next year. A four-day week is when people work one less day per week but still get paid the same salary. A four-day week, which for a full-time employee at the Council would consist of 30 hours, can make an organisation stand out from others and be more attractive to talent. It is also seen as a tangible incentive to encourage staff to stay.

Another aspiration of the trial is to investigate whether it would help the Council to attract a more diverse workforce. For example, for those families where childcare costs can be a big blocker from working, or those people with caring responsibilities, it could be a more attractive option than the traditional five-day working week model. This is because the cost of childcare or caring could be reduced, which can also help support wider cost of living rises.

The Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cllr Bridget Smith, said: “The trial would be all about seeing if a four-day week has the same positive impact on productivity, staff wellbeing and recruitment in Local Government, as seen elsewhere. As a Council we are leading the way on this; it could be truly ground-breaking for local councils nationally. We only filled around half our vacancies during the first few months of this year and using temporary agency staff in these office roles costs us more than £2million a year. We know that if we instead filled those roles permanently, it would only cost around £1million a year. As we look for solutions to these issues, these proposals suggest a robust, evidence-based trial for three months. Of course, it must be a trial that works for our residents and businesses too.

“Attracting and retaining staff is an issue for most councils. Therefore, along with lots of organisations from around the world, we think this is something that is worth investigating. Not only could it help with the wellbeing and retention of our existing staff, but I am hugely keen that we open ourselves up as an employer to a more diverse workforce.”

**Avenells Way Tree:** South Cambs contractors confirm they did carry out tree works in Avenells Way on the 26th July, so it is likely that the tree removed was in a dangerous conditions.

**Heath Road Gamlingay:** Please be advised that at some point between 01/09/2022 and 29/02/2024 (not a typo) Heath Road will be closed for resurfacing.

**Recycling of electrical items:** South Cambs has installed eight new recycling banks (the pink ones) for small electrical items like hairdryers, toasters and phones. Closest to us are at Morrisons car park in Cambourne, Tesco car park in Bar Hill and the Village car park on the High Street in Melbourn.

There are also existing pink electrical recycling banks at Milton and Thriplow Household Recycling Centres. Small appliances can also be handed in for recycling in-store at Curry's on Newmarket Road in Cambridge.

**Anglian and Cambridge Water: FAQ supplied by Anglian Water:** Why is there no hosepipe ban in the Anglian Water region even though we are in drought?



We're the driest region of the UK and so are always working hard to prepare for prolonged dry weather. We have invested heavily in our water supply infrastructure so that we have additional storage, treatment and transportation capacity for situations like this. Our priority is ensuring a safe and clean supply of drinking water across our region.

Would Anglian Water call a hose pipe ban if the situation changes?

Anglian Water will take whatever steps are needed to protect water supplies. We have a detailed drought plan for scenarios just like this, so if we reach the point of needing a hosepipe ban, we won't hesitate to introduce one. We are not there yet though.

Why are there more burst pipes and leaks when it's hot and dry?

When it's hot and dry for prolonged periods the ground dries out and that causes movement. This puts more strain on pipes and can cause them to burst.

What has Anglian Water done to prepare for summer demand?

We invest heavily in new water supplies, water storage, and network resilience. In addition, we continue to work hard to find and fix leaks and have the lowest levels of leakage in the industry. We've also got a strong track record when it comes to engaging customers about the importance of water efficiency and 90% of homes in our region have a water meter.

What are you doing to help farmers who are struggling to get enough water and nature?

Anglian Water has reduced abstraction from rivers in key areas to make sure there is extra water available for agriculture and the environment. In addition, we've also opened a number of boreholes and are pumping water into critical rivers to ensure water availability. We will continue to look at ways we can support agriculture and nature as everyone responds to the drought.

And new Reservoirs?

Anglian Water is developing proposals for two new reservoirs. One is proposed to be in the Fens and will see Anglian working together with Cambridge Water. The other will be located in Lincolnshire and each will be around the size of Grafham Water.

The East of England is one of the driest and fastest-growing regions in the country, receiving a third less rainfall than the UK average, and is home to many unique and precious landscapes that rely on water. This summer's heat wave is just one of the kinds of extreme weather challenges that are becoming more common. Construction of the new reservoirs could begin by 2030, with the expectation that they would start supplying water to customer taps by the mid to late 2030s'.

**Gamlingay Street Lights:** We are aware that the streets lights in Station Rd and Church Lane and Holly Walk are not working. Apparently this is a supply issue and is being investigated.

**Arrington Roadworks:** Finally work has begun on the new drainage scheme on the A1198 after a false start in March. This will go a long way to ensuring property remains safe and the new river makes no further appearances. Thank you for your patience with this -I shared your frustration!!

**Ivy Farm Bridge: new public right of way consultation:** As Susan has been reporting, Hertfordshire County Council, which owns the Ivy Farm Bridge, currently an agricultural bridge over the A505 just west of the A1198/A10 roundabout, is preparing a formal consultation on the creation of new rights of way on either side of the bridge, as part of a footpath diversion order, which would enable a legal right of way across the bridge and provide a safe pedestrian connection between Royston and Bassingbourn (and on to Litlington).

As soon as the consultation document is ready in mid-September, we will let you know. There will be no box ticking form, rather an address will be provided to which people can write and express their views. Please note that the proposal is for legal rights of way enabling a pedestrian crossing only - a first step in creating public access over the bridge. Achieving this would be ground-breaking, so if you support the principle please do say so!

**Flies:** Environmental health officers have visited a number of chicken farms in the locality and report that they are outstandingly well run and clean though in one case some further guidance has been given. We are hearing positive feedback from residents who have reported problems recently that issues with flies are reducing.

**Let's Get South Cambridgeshire Active Grant:** As part of our Healthy You programme, our Let's Get South Cambridgeshire Active grants help independent businesses and entrepreneurs start up or enhance existing health and wellbeing activities in communities. Providers can apply for up to £300 per programme and can run more than one programme in a village or across numerous villages. We want to ensure that provisions and opportunities are in place around for residents to enjoy a healthy, active lifestyle.

**Inflationary pressures on district and county councils:** The County Councils Network and the Society of County Treasurers have highlighted that inflation has left forty of England's largest councils with £729M of additional unfunded costs since they set their budgets in March. To balance their budgets—as they are legally required to—and control costs, councils warn they face a winter of 'difficult decisions'.

The increased costs nationally include • £428M for adult social care services • £72M for children's social care • £397M for capital projects • £107M for energy prices • £136M for external contract and labour costs • £77M for school transport services • £259M for staff pay

These inflationary costs far outstrip any increases in Government funding or council tax.

**A428 upgrade:** Highways England has confirmed that the Secretary of State for Transport granted planning permission to transform the route between the A1 Black Cat and A428 Caxton Gibbet roundabout. Improvements will include a new 10-mile dual carriageway and new junctions; and will cost between £810 to £950 million and is aimed to improve journeys between Cambridge and Milton Keynes. Both existing roundabouts will be upgraded to modern, free-flowing junctions. The notorious Eltislely turn will just disappear!

**Free Access to Community Groups to Wimpole Hall:** Wimpole Estate is offering local community groups free admission to the estate and its facilities; recognizing that National Trust membership or the standard admission charges are not accessible to everyone. Each pass issued under this initiative would provide free access for up to 16 people.

Passes may be used on any day except on bank holidays and the weekends preceding bank holidays. If you know of groups who would be interested in receiving free admission passes please contact [wimpoleforeveryone@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:wimpoleforeveryone@nationaltrust.org.uk).

**Fire Service:** The recent extreme hot weather brought into focus – yet again – just how brilliant our Fire and Rescue Service is. Fire Control had nearly 800 calls in two days. Our operational crews were out dealing with fire after fire, resulting in it being the busiest day since we started using our recording system. Not only this, but having to deal with these incidents in record-breaking temperatures.

A particular mention to for on-call staff such as at Gamlingay - many of whom sacrificed annual leave from their regular employers, moved around family commitments or other work to make sure they were available to respond, knowing they would be needed.

**20MPH schemes:** A County Council working group is finalising criteria for assessment of 20MPH applications. It has already decided to remove the requirement that existing speeds in an application area should already be 24MPH or below. Fourteen 20MPH applications from this year's Local Highways Improvement applications have already been moved from the LHI process to be the first cohort of schemes to be developed under this new budget.

**East West Rail:** The future of EWR is looking ever more uncertain now that there have been a couple of negative unofficial ministerial statements. South Cambs and the County Council have very little influence over this and the new minister for transport will do whatever he or she judges most expedient. South Cambs has a statement about it on the website.

EWR is a Government scheme being delivered by a private company resulting in poor accountability and little transparency. It has been an enormous frustration that government has kept residents completely in dark for years now about their intentions. This is a pitiful way of delivering a major piece of public transport infrastructure.

**Social Care - are you finding it hard to know where to get support?:** These are the contact numbers for any matter relating to children's and adults' social care. The person who answers the phone should be able to direct the call appropriately. It can feel bewildering to work through social services for the first time. Please feel free to get in touch if any support is needed in navigating the system. Adults: 0345 045 5202 Children: 0345 045 5203

**Meanwhile on the Combined Authority:** The new Interim Chief Executive now has his feet under the table, and has been delegated considerable power to appoint interims to senior roles. All focus is on Improvement, with up to £750K allocated to this work, and a self-assessment to be reported to the Board in September. A review of Governance has also taken place, with 47 recommendations for action. A Member-Officer protocol has been drawn up to improve behaviour and relationships.

Government-funded programmes to improve the energy efficiency of low income and energy inefficient homes have run into problems nationally as well as locally. The 'net zero energy hub' for Greater South East England - including Cambridgeshire & Peterborough - was awarded £78.35M in Green Homes Grant (LAD2) money, and £118M for the Sustainable Warmth Programme. But lack of capacity in the supply chain, including surveyors and installers, means it has been impossible to spend

anything like this. Extensions of time given by Government to deliver previous schemes have resulted in low take up of later schemes because available contractors are still working on earlier ones. Turning to Bus Service Improvement Plans the Government prioritised areas with lower economic growth. As Cambridgeshire & Peterborough—as a whole—does not fall into this category, it is not surprising that its bid failed. Meanwhile the Combined Authority is preparing for the massive bus upheaval when the Government ceases Covid support to bus providers.

Your Councillors are always ready to help. 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 District Councillor Bridget Smith (Gamlingay Ward, SCDC) is on 07729 836449 or [Cllr.BridgetSmith@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.BridgetSmith@scambs.gov.uk)

### **Correspondence:**

**Electoral Register:** There are five alterations to the Electoral Register, which the Clerk will update. The paperwork was circulated to Councillors for their information.

**Switch-blog (Energy info):** A circular from a company offering information on grants and payments. All this information is available on South Cambs website.

**Fens reservoirs:** A lot of emails received, why they are needed, where might they be, how is the location decided etc, but as yet no firm information about them. A consultation will be announced in the autumn.

**Bogus Companies scam:** Crime gangs are registering bogus companies at residential addresses without the homeowner knowing. Companies House has no legal powers to verify or validate details sent to them, so anyone can register a company to any address. This type of identity theft is an important reminder to tear or shred all personal documentation before disposing of it and be careful who you share it with. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-62494987>

**New cancer hospital for children:** Anthony Brown is campaigning for specialist hospitals for children and cancer patients if you would like to join the campaign go to:- [https://backourcampaign.co.uk/campaigns/cambridge-childrens-hospital?utm\\_medium=offline](https://backourcampaign.co.uk/campaigns/cambridge-childrens-hospital?utm_medium=offline)

**Community Groups and Wimpole Estate:** The General Manager of Wimpole Hall is passionate that everyone can enjoy all that Wimpole has to offer and recognises that National Trust membership or the standard admission charges are not accessible to everyone. There is an initiative to issue free access to Community Groups for up to 16 people. There are certain criteria to be met and passes may be used on any day except on bank holidays and the weekends preceding bank holidays. Those intending to use the pass are asked to email [wimpolehall@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:wimpolehall@nationaltrust.org.uk) or call the estate before coming, stating the name of the group, the number of people and approximate time of arrival. Where practical community groups are encouraged to visit during weekdays as Wimpole can get very busy at weekends when there may be less scope to cater for additional needs. If you would like to apply, please contact the Clerk for the form required and return it via email to [wimpoleforeveryone@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:wimpoleforeveryone@nationaltrust.org.uk).

Policing South Cambs: Chief Inspector Paul Rogerson will be giving a presentation to Parish Councils online on 5 October at 7pm. The Clerk will try to attend.

**ZCC autumn newsletter:** Circulated to Councillors and is sent direct to those who have expressed an interest.

**SCDC trial of 4-day working week:** This is being trialled as SCDC is unable to recruit and retain staff. A four-day week is when people work one less day per week, but still get paid the same salary. It is hoped that this will encourage people to work for, and remain working for the Council.

**Volunteers for Community Gritting:** This is a scheme where local volunteers can help to keep their community moving in freezing weather. Under this scheme, the parish or town council decides on specific routes in their area which are important to the local community and agrees them with the county council. Council declined this as bus routes are gritted by Council anyway.

**Transport Strategies Consultation:** This is targeted at Fenland and Huntingdon and has been delayed due to the death of Her Majesty. When the consultation does start it will run for 8 weeks.

**CPR training:** The Clerk received a booklet from the East Anglian Air Ambulance service. They are offering one hour's free training on essential first aid and the use of a defibrillator. This information has been passed to the Tuesday Group. There may need to be a donation for this.

**South Cambs Markets:** South Cambs District Council is compiling a directory of market stall holders. If you would like to be included in this, go to:-

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/business/south-cambridgeshire-markets/>

A market is held at Guilden Morden in the car park of the Three Tuns on a monthly basis. The next one is on 8th October. Cllr Williams has further details.

**Civility and Respect:** The Clerk received information from SLCC asking that Councils would consider signing up to the Civility and Respect pledge. Cllr Williams encouraged this and Councillors asked for further information about it. Clerk will scan and circulate the paperwork.

**Correspondence dealt with during the summer break**

- Fusion for Business
- 'Free To Feed' a Breastfeeding Pilot Campaign
- Peterborough Environmental City Trust (from ACRE)
- Cambs ACRE newsletter
- Cambridgeshire Matters newsletter
- Anthony Browne - Congestion Charge

**Subsequent Receipts:** None received

**Finance:**

**Exemption:** A letter confirming Council's exempt status from audit was received.

**Bank Statements:** Balance on the current account for July:- £4478 - 65

Balance on the account for August:- £3975 - 65

**Precept:** The second instalment of the precept, £2145 - 00, was received.

**Planning:** Councillors have twice asked Greater Cambridge Planning to refer the Planning Application 22/020886/FUL to the Planning Committee. A negative response was received in both cases and the application was passed on the recommendation of an officer. Council had also asked for clarification of certain items, prior to this application being passed. After 8 weeks a response was received and Councillors were not satisfied with it. Cllr Williams is going to try and arrange a meeting with the relevant officers for a face to face discussion.

**22/02260/FUL - Croydon Reading Room:** Application was successful.

**22/020886/FUL - Clopton Farm:** As Council was unable to secure a referral to the Planning Committee, this application for retrospective work was finally passed.

**Items for next agenda:** None put forward.

**Date of the next meeting:** Wednesday 16th November 2022 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm

As there was no further business, Councillors were thanked for attending and the meeting was declared closed at 8.58pm.

Signed .....

Date .....