

A meeting of Croydon Parish Council was held on Wednesday 18th January 2023 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.

Apologies: Mrs Sole - working late, Mr Wenman - stuck in traffic.

Present: Mr Barnes, Mr Buchanan, Mr Sole, Mr Wheeler, Ms Newland, the Clerk, Cllr Williams and Cllr Kindersley (later). One member of public arrived later in the meeting

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

Declarations of Interest: None received

Verbal report from Cllr Williams:

Emails: Cllr Williams' email address at SCDC is under investigation, with a view to rectifying it.

Local Plan: This is for 57,000 new homes - 8,000 more than was originally planned, and nowhere specified to put them. The Local Plan website has not been updated since last summer and Cllr Williams has asked that it be updated regularly, which has been agreed to. This is a water-stressed area and Cllr Williams is concerned that there will not be sufficient water for this number of homes. A "Southern Cluster" has been spoken about, which Cllr Williams queried. Apparently the Southern Cluster is the green belt around Addenbrookes and villages to the south of Cambridge, although **not** Thakeham.

Accounts: The 2019-2020 accounts have been audited, and Council is still well behind where it should be. Hopefully this will be approaching where the accounts process should be, very shortly.

Platinum Jubilee Village Hall grants: The Reading Rooms has applied for a grant, which Cllr Williams is supporting.

Meeting at SC Hall: Cllr Williams has arranged a meeting on 9th February at 2pm about Compliance, or what used to be called Enforcement, to hear what the planners say and so that they can appraise Council of the ongoing issues around retrospective planning in and around the parish. Mr Buchanan and Mr Barnes will attend - other Councillors may also attend if available.

Mechanical Cleaner: Cllr Williams has finally tracked down the required person and found out the information requested by a resident. The cleaner can be adjusted from 1m wide up to 2.5 m wide, but cannot be used by a member of the public. The machine can brush the pavement, but cannot operate on grass. The details of the gentleman to contact at SCDC can be obtained from the Clerk. When contacting him, please copy Cllr Williams into the correspondence.

District Councillor Williams' written report to the meeting - Winter 2022-23:-

May I start by wishing all a happy new year. I am aware of my continued email issues and have therefore put together a combined report that covers topics over the last few months, my apologies if this provides repeats for some but I hope it will still be of use. May I stress that if residents or yourself need to get in touch and are struggling to get emails through please do give me a call.

4 day week: The trial has begun, initially for 3 months (January to March); this will then be reviewed, and a decision will be taken whether to extend the trial based on evaluating the KPIs. This trial is for office-based workers only at present and does not currently include waste collection operatives.

Missed bins and food waste caddies: There has been an increase of residents getting in touch about their bins being missed. Please do encourage people to report missed bins on the link below. A key issue has been for assisted collections: these residents are often vulnerable and potentially find it difficult to report any missed collections to the council. If you are aware of anyone that may be struggling to get their bins collected please do get in touch. <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/portal-eform-landing-pages/?u=https://forms.scambs.gov.uk/MISSEDBIN/launch>

Some villages within the ward are currently on a separate food waste trial. This is not an option for the missed bin form. If this has been missed, please email refuse@scambs.gov.uk

Changes to battery collections: The council has adjusted collection vehicles so that we are now able to collect household batteries for recycling every bin day meaning residents can leave out their batteries weekly on top of their green, black or blue bins. But to help make collections more efficient residents are asked to place a small tied plastic bag containing the batteries loosely on top of their bin, rather than tying it to the bin handle.

Money Helper –Government website: Just a reminder of the support available via the Money Helper website. Below are some of the topics where information is available:

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

[Free and impartial help with money, backed by the government | MoneyHelper](#)

Warm Hubs: The District council has opened a series of Warm Hubs to support residents, below are some of the closest Hubs to the ward:

- Caldecote Warm Hub Venue: Caldecote Pavilion, Furlong Way, Highfields, Caldecote, Cambridge, CB23 7ZH Opening Times: Tuesday, 9:30am - 12:30pm, Thursday, 12pm - 3pm
Open From: Tuesday 25 October 2022
- Gamlingay Warm Hub Venue: Gamlingay Eco Hub Community Centre, Stocks Lane, Gamlingay, Sandy, SG19 3JR Opening Times: Monday, 2pm - 4pm; Wednesday, 2pm - 4pm; Thursday 10am - 12pm; Friday 10.30am - 12.30pm; and Saturday, 10am - 12pm
Open From: Monday 24 October 2022
- Hardwick Warm Hub Venue: Hardwick Evangelical Church, Broadway House, 149 - 151 St Neots Road, Hardwick, Cambridge, CB23 7QJ Opening Times: Tuesday, 11am - 2pm
Open From: Tuesday 1 November 2022
- Melbourn Warm Hub Venue: Vicarage Close Community Hall, Vicarage Close, Melbourn, Royston, SG8 6DY Opening times: Monday and Thursday, 12pm - 3pm Notes: Opening date to be confirmed
- Meldreth Warm Hub Venue: Meldreth Sheltered Housing Building, Elin Way, Meldreth, Royston, SG8 6LX Opening times: Tuesday and Thursday, 12pm - 3pm.

Support for Ukrainian Families: The District Council, along with Cambridge City Council, is running a campaign to recruit extra hosts. Anyone who can offer a spare room and warm welcome is being asked to text ROOM to 88802 so that the councils can support them through the process and match hosts to guests who have already started to settle in the local area.

Hosts receive a £350 monthly Government 'Thank you' payment. Both councils are also offering extra opt-in monthly payments to hosts of £150, in response to feedback about rising costs of housing guests, particularly over the winter months. Further information of what support is available via the link:- <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/support-for-ukraine/>

Congestion Charging: The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Board have completed their consultation on the introduction of a charging zone in Cambridge City and areas of South Cambridgeshire. During this process many have been asking how and who makes the decision as to whether or not a charge is introduced. It has been clarified that while the Greater Cambridge Partnership that has promoted and performed the consultation the decision will have to ultimately be made by Cambridgeshire County Council. I brought a motion to full council in November (as is below) trying to get the District Council to respond to the consultation and raise the concerns many have raised with myself. Unfortunately this was not successful. I had hoped that even if the reasons for refusal were not agreed that the Council would still respond to the consultation however the District Council has made no response.

18a Standing in the name of Councillor Heather Williams This council notes the concerns raised by many residents across South Cambridgeshire about the introduction of a 'Sustainable Travel Zone' that would charge people to enter the zone via motor vehicle. This council will formally respond to the Greater Cambridge Partnerships consultation relaying these concerns on behalf of the residents we serve. This council, as part of the consultation, will raise opposition to the introduction of said charge and cite the inclusion of Addenbrooke's and Royal Papworth Hospital as absolutely unacceptable.

Decision: Council Rejected this Motion.

Community Chest Grants: have been expanded to help with Cost of Living Councillors in October recommended that the Community Chest Grant criteria be expanded to allow bids that include contributions for any project that has a positive impact for communities related to the cost-of-living crisis. If anyone would like to apply for a grant they can do so via the link below.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/communitychest>

Grants for Electric Charging Points: A new grant is now available called The Electric Vehicle (EV) Charge Point Grant. It is to fund the installation of Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCPs) for use by the public in the car parks of community buildings and village halls within South Cambridgeshire. Steeple Morden Parish Council has already been successful in being awarded this grant and my congratulations goes to all who have worked on the submission and helped make this successful bid.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/climate-emergency-and-nature/grants-funding-and-community-support/electric-vehicle-charge-point-grant/>

Planning Enforcement Form: The way in which planning enforcement queries can be made has changed recently. Residents are now asked to submit an online form rather than emailing the compliance team. A link to the form is below.

<https://forms.scambs.gov.uk/REPORTABREACHOFPLANNINGCONTROL/launch>

Planning Enforcement action has been a matter of debate at both planning committee and full council. There is real frustration from councillors like myself that not enough resource and priority is given to enforcing planning consents. Council officers can only act within the parameters that councillors set for them. This is why I was happy to support the motion below that regrettably was unsuccessful. I believe that enforcement is important as a deterrent to stop people who deliberately seek to overstep the mark of what they can and cannot do, but also to give residents confidence in the system as a whole.

18b Standing in the name of Councillor Tom Bygott This council notes the lack of planning enforcement actually taken in the last 2 years and raises its concerns. We as a council wish to make clear that we will take enforcement action when breaches are made. We will instruct officers that it is this council's view that enforcement should be taken unless good grounds not to as opposed to the apparent current reverse ethos.

Decision: Council Rejected this Motion.

Emerging Local Plan update: There has been an announcement by the District Council that the next local plan will be planning for even more houses than previously thought. This means that with a buffer in place around 57,000 houses will be allocated for development in the next local plan. I have provided a link to the documents that went before the Scrutiny and Overview Committee. I have challenged the wisdom of increasing housing figures given the pressures that our local services that already exists. Around 8,000 of the houses within this new number are unallocated. I have raised concerns that villages will become under more pressure of development. While assurances have been given that the current spatial strategy is being continued that does allow for further development in villages. I tried to get information as to what sites have been promoted and publish the works which hasn't been updated since the Summer, I await a decision as to when the Council will update it. Below is an extract of Appendix D of the Scrutiny papers:

"This option would deliver a substantial amount of housing development within Cambridge city, particularly at North East Cambridge and densification of consented development at North West Cambridge and the Cambridge urban area. It also includes a substantial amount of housing development at Cambridge Airport and around Cambourne, with additional development within the 'southern cluster' and villages. This option also includes faster delivery rates at Northstowe and Waterbeach. This option focuses employment development at North East Cambridge, Cambridge Airport, Cambridge Biomedical Campus and Cambourne, although the majority of this is expected to come forward beyond the plan period. Additional rural employment locations are identified at Babraham and on the A14 corridor in vicinity of Swavesey Junction, as well as in the southern cluster and villages."

<https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=417&MId=9693&Ver=4>

Council's 2019/2020 accounts are still in the process of being audited. It has been a continuing concern raised by the Audit and Corporate Governance committee. It has been incredibly frustrating and while communication between the council and the External Auditors has improved I do feel that if this could be fully addressed then the audit process could really speed up. The 2019 external audit fees are still being negotiated but below are the latest figures that have been made available. Given the District Council is also paying for interim officers to help catch up with previous years' accounts has led me to question at times the value for money that the council is providing residents in regards to this matter.

	Planned fee 2019/20 (£)	Final Fee 2018/19 (£)
Scale Fee - Code work	40,021	40,021
Additional risks and areas of focus (Note 1)		
Additional audit overruns & delays (Note 2)	0	106,500
Risk - Group accounts	4,000 - 5,000	5,000
Risk - Presentation and disclosure of accounting items and Impact of 50% performance materiality & higher risk factors	10,000 - 20,000	20,000
Risk - Data migration relating to new Fixed Asset Register (FAR)	0	152,000
Risk - New financial management system	0	7,500
Risk - Going concern	1,500 - 3,500	3,500
Risk - New accounting standards	0	1,250
Risk - Capital Accounting Entries	5,000 - 20,000	0
Risk - Valuation of Investment Properties	3,000 - 6,000	0
Risk - Non-domestic rate (NDR) appeals provision - change in management expert	2,000 - 5,000	0
VFM - qualification in relation to Council's weaknesses in meeting financial reporting duties for publishing draft and audited accounts	0 - 3,500	3,500
Total audit	65,521 - 103,021	339,271
Non-audit services:		
Housing Benefits (Note 3)	14,995	14,815
Total other non-audit services	14,995	14,815
Total fees	80,516 - 118,016	354,086

Cllr Heather Williams SCDC The Mordens Ward

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As Council had no further questions for Cllr Williams, she was thanked for attending and left for her next meeting.

Matters Arising and Village Issues:

Community Reports: None received

Dog/Litter Bin signs: These have been ordered by one of the Dog Bin group.

London Luton Flight Paths: After the Mailchimp sent out to gauge interest in a surgery, Clerk only received one reply. Therefore a surgery in Croydon will not be arranged. There is a public meeting being held in Little Gransden Village Hall, with several MPs in attendance, on 23rd February at 7.30pm. If you are unable to attend in person there will be Zoom attendance available, and the Clerk will circulate the link when she receives it.

Street Cleaning Machine: See Cllr Williams' report above.

Gmail addresses: Clerk is still waiting for two Councillors to set up their g-mail addresses and send her notification of this.

Hastoe - Affordable housing: An internal meeting for 11th Jan between the Diocese, Hastoe and two PCC reps has taken place. Mr Buchanan was present as an observer. Reports of the meeting from both a PCC member and Mr Buchanan are below.

PCC Report:

The meeting was called by the Diocese of Ely Glebe and Investments Officer, also in attendance were representatives from Hastoe housing association. Two PCC members attended, together with Mr Buchanan as an observer for the PC. An ad-hoc group of engaged villagers was consulted ahead of the meeting to identify areas of concern and sensitivity to put to the Diocese. Another member of the PC was included in the ad-hoc group by virtue of also being a member of the PCC.

The list of topics that emerged from the ad-hoc group was made openly available to the meeting. This included opportunities such as church parking, small play area, community land for such as tree planting, but also the potential loss of amenity e.g. the east field, which has previously been used courtesy of the present tenants.

Only the two glebe fields to the east and west of Church Lane were the subjects of discussion, the field south of the road to Arrington was said to be unlikely to gain planning approval. Hastoe reminded the meeting that, following the 2019 Housing Needs Survey, originally seven potential sites had been identified but only the Diocese has stepped forward. Both of the fields along Church Lane would be viewed by SCDC to be Rural Exception Sites so could only be developed for affordable

housing with community support. Small schemes of this kind offer levels of reward to the landowner far below commercial development rates. The east field was at present favoured, with the reasons given being closer integration with the village and connections to services such as power, water and drainage. They also felt that aesthetically a small development behind the hedge/tree line would have minimal visual impact.

Hastoe emphasised that once the Diocese had completed its thinking, they would not contemplate proceeding without taking careful soundings from the community. They would wish to work with the PC to host one or more public drop-in events and they would only proceed on the strength of a good level of community support. Hastoe expressed a high degree of confidence that the rules underlying this kind of development in a community of this size meant that the houses would not be permitted to migrate towards the open commercial market.

In the light of what they heard, the ball is now back firmly in the Diocese's and Hastoe's court as they consider what flexibility they might have in respect of wider community needs and locations; Diocesan links to the PCC could be very important in these areas as otherwise market land rates should apply. We wait and see what if anything further emerges.

Mr Buchanan's report:

Notes of meeting on 11/01/23 discussing possible social housing on glebe land in Croydon.

Attending:

- two representatives from Hastoe Housing Association
- one representative from The Design Partnership
- one representative from Croydon Parochial Church Council (PCC)
- one representative from Diocesan Board of Finance / PCC
- the Diocesan Glebe and Investments Officer
- Land agent representing the Diocese of Ely

Introductions:

Names and roles as above

My brief introduction outlined my role as an observer for Croydon Parish Council (PC) and that my responsibility was to act as a conduit for information to the parish council.

Discussion points:

- Diocese has a financial and social responsibility to make best use of its assets
- Repeated public surveys show clear demand and need for more local housing
- Villagers overwhelmingly support more housing, particularly affordable housing
- Options are limited by availability of sites and crucially interested landowners
- Villagers are sensitive to design, quantity, location, house ownership
- Villagers are sensitive to loss of a 'borrowed' amenity and fundraising location
- Villagers are sensitive to the fair treatment of the current tenant
- Explanation of Hastoe's role, funding, purpose, objectives, limitations
- Hastoe offer rental and part ownership, but no outright ownership
- Affordable housing vs market rate housing limits the scope for community facilities

Going forward:

- Hastoe / Diocese need to reach an agreement (might involve PCC) on preferences
- Exception site planning means Hastoe must have the support of village residents, PC
- Support must be gauged before Hastoe can invest more time on the project
- Hastoe keen to have a public information sharing event (possibly 3-7PM) via the PC
- If well received, Hastoe will fund and update the Housing Needs Survey for planning

Lower Road - accidents: A report from the Road Safety Team is awaited, following the double fatal accident recently. Until this is received nothing in the way of signage or speed limits can be pursued. Cllr Kindersley will receive a copy of this report and communicate it to Council. If not sanctioned in the report and it is felt to be necessary, Council will be able to apply to change the speed limit through the Minor Highways Improvements scheme. There would be a cost to Council involved in this. If the limit could be reduced to 40mph, this would allow SpeedWatch to operate in that area.

Memorial Cleaning: An estimate for the work to clean the memorial has been received from a local company, whose work has been recommended. The estimate is for £400 + VAT, which Council can reclaim. A copy of the Public Liability policy for the company will be required. It was proposed by Mr Buchanan and seconded by Mr Barnes that, subject to sight of the insurance, this company be instructed

to steam clean the memorial. All in favour. Clerk pointed out that only one estimate has been sought, because of the difficulty in obtaining quotations for small jobs. She sent out 6 requests for installing the defibrillator and received one response. She suggested that Council might like to consider instigating Financial Regulations to manage this, and she will look into what is required for the February meeting.

Warm Hubs: After the Mailchimp sent out to gauge interest in a fortnightly Croydon Café, Clerk only received one offer of help. Therefore the Café will continue on a monthly basis.

Correspondence:

Electoral Register: None received

CCC - Care Together: Clerk has received a questionnaire from Cambs County Council's Adult Social Care commissioner, asking for people over 55 in the Mordens Ward (which covers Croydon) to complete and return. Clerk is doing her best to do this.

GCP Compliance Policy consultation: "Planning plays a vital role in managing development, but it can only achieve these objectives if it operates an effective planning compliance service. As part of our commitment to delivering an efficient and effective planning compliance regime, GSCP has drafted the Joint Planning Compliance Policy." This is in the new Enforcement section of planning. The consultation was sent out just before Christmas and ends on 20th January. Councillors were sent the link in order to make any comments they felt necessary.

Community Led Housing: Eastern Community Homes are offering to help with community led housing. As this is already happening in Croydon, Council is not interested in this.

Anthony Browne actions: Anthony Browne has been very active on behalf of his constituents regarding the flight paths issue. So far he has:- Written to NATS regarding their initial consultation process

Arranged and hosted a meeting with fellow MPs, Councillors and Campaign Group leaders with the proposers of the new flightpath NATS and Luton Airport as well as representatives from the Civil Aviation Authority

Requested an extension to the Post-Implementation Review period from the Civil Aviation Authority. Anthony understands that residents wish to see the disturbances stop immediately and shares that view. That is unfortunately not realistic at this point. The PIR period began in February 2022 when the aviation industry was still recovering from the pandemic. Anthony is therefore concerned that the PIR will not accurately reflect the aviation industry when it is operating at full capacity. An extension to the PIR review would ensure that long-term decisions are made with full appreciation of usual operating levels.

Written to the Minister for Aviation asking that guidelines for decibel levels in rural areas reflect the lower ambient noise levels. In South Cambridgeshire it is estimated that the ambient noise level is around 30 decibels during the day and 18 at night. In urban areas, such as London, the ambient noise level can be up to 70 decibels. The current guidelines suggest that noise below 51 decibels does not have an adverse impact on quality of life. For context, within 10 metres and HGV records a noise level of roughly 48 decibels. It is therefore Anthony's view that the lower ambient noise level of rural areas, such as South Cambridgeshire, be taken into account as part of the CAP1616 process

There was a debate in the House of Commons on Monday 9th January at 10pm which was televised on BBC Parliament and is available online <https://fb.watch/hZdQdeZubp/>

Anthony will also be attending a public meeting held by local campaign groups in February. Mr Browne will continue to monitor the situation.

Parish UK Network: "We would like to invite Croydon Parish to confirm your contact details on the PARISH.UK Network. The network has been recently launched to provide a consistent and recognisable framework on which to display open-source data about parishes across England and Wales." Apparently this is a free service. Council has a website and details are also available on SCDC website. The Chairman will look at the information to determine if it is suitable for Council.

Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund: From SCDC:- "Village halls in England can now apply for grants to improve and modernise their facilities through the Fund.

Village halls interested in applying for this national scheme can request grants from £7,500 to £75,000, and up to a maximum of 20 per cent of eligible project costs.

Capital grants will be allocated to support infrastructure improvements, the refurbishment of facilities, such as kitchens and toilets, and measures to improve energy efficiency.

The application window opened just before Christmas and will close on 20 January 2023. Successful applicants being able to draw on the funding from April 2023."

Clerk sent this on to the Reading Room Trustees, who reported that an application had been made, but was turned down as it was too small. This appeared to be an error on SCDC's part, as the application was within the parameters stated in the e-mail.

CCC Highways events: Forthcoming events are 5th March - Cambridge Half Marathon, 2nd April - Cambourne School Lane Closure.

Volunteering Fair at Long Road: Requesting organisations who require volunteers might like to attend a Fair in the 6th form college on 25th January. Students can be made aware of the different ways they can contribute to society and the community and to build their own skills and capabilities by volunteering. Several third sector organisations are needed to participate in the event which will allow students to find out about the different volunteering roles that are available across our region and nationally. Apart from a great opportunity for students to take an interest in volunteering it may be a way for your organisation to inspire and potentially recruit new volunteers. This information has been circulated via Mailchimp.

Circulated:

- Parish Council Liaison Meeting recording
- 3C Building Control year end review
- Greater Cambridge Local Plan - committee reports
- Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Fund

Any subsequent receipts

Waste Recycling: The Waste Education Centre is open and visits can be booked. This information will be placed on the notice board.

Local Plan: It was reported that "There will not be any public consultation on the development strategy update or its supporting documents and evidence at this point. However, it will guide preparation of the draft local plan, which will be brought to councillors later in the year, to be followed by full public consultation in the autumn."

County Councillor Kindersley's verbal report:-

Buses: Efforts are being made to get in touch with landowners whose trees overhang the highway, as bus companies are reporting that branches are striking the vehicles.

Potholes: CCC has received 5580 reports of potholes in the county. The Council now has two Dragon patches, and are doing their best to repair as many of the potholes as they can.

Highway Survey: CCC has scored a 3% improvement in the latest survey.

County Cllr Kindersley's 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!

Making Connections Consultation: The Greater Cambridge Partnership Making Connections 2022 consultation closed on 23 December. This was about proposals for public transport improvements, better cycling and walking options, and a Cambridge congestion charge. Around 23,000 responses were received, and the Greater Cambridge Partnership expects to publish a final report on the consultation outcomes and next steps for consideration by its Board in June 2023. Significant work in the coming weeks to take on board the consultation responses will then inform that report.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority: Buses continue to be a hot topic across Cambridgeshire. The Combined Authority is the transport authority responsible for passenger transport across our area, working within a legislative framework and a deregulated bus system.

The Combined Authority Board agreed a draft Bus Strategy on 30 November—consultation is planned to start in the week beginning Monday 9 January for six weeks. The Strategy will then go to the Combined Authority's Transport & Infrastructure Committee and the Board in March. The Strategy will form part of the suite of documents associated with the Combined Authority's emerging Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP).

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough was one of a majority of local transport authorities to be given no funding by Government for its Bus Service Improvement Plan. The Combined Authority is working with partners to prepare a revised Plan reflecting the priorities of the emerging LTCP and the draft Bus

Strategy. This will be presented to the Transport & Infrastructure Committee and the Board in May / June.

Bus franchising is the Mayor's preferred solution for bus services in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. Under this model the local transport authority takes control of the public transport network, specifying and contracting bus services, as opposed to the deregulated free-for-all in place since 1986. Work is ongoing to refresh the outline business case for franchising. This will explore all potential funding options and assess the benefits of franchising against the current system. The business case will also review other issues including geography, contracting, depots, vehicles, and branding. The majority of bus services in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough are run commercially by private operators, and the Combined Authority has no control over these.

The Combined Authority currently subsidises 73 services across its area. Full support for eighteen services and partial support for a further five began in October 2022 after Stagecoach withdrew from these services. There is an option to extend the contracts for these by one year from the end of March, and final decisions on these will be taken in February or March following the setting of the Combined Authority's budget and taking account of the draft Bus Strategy. Contracts for a further six of the 73 services expire at the end of March 2023 and a procurement process has begun to retender these. The Combined Authority will set its budget for 2023/24, including bus support, at its Board meeting on 25 January. The Transport & Infrastructure Committee will consider a Bus Assessment Framework in January.

The GCP Making Connections proposals include an enhanced bus network and mechanisms for both upfront investment and ongoing subsidy. The Combined Authority will need to consider the effect of this on its own work. The GCP would develop any necessary outline business case, and any decision on road charging would rest with the County Council. In an initiative with Stagecoach and the Greater Cambridge Partnership, the Combined Authority secured Government funding for thirty zero emission buses for Cambridge. These are expected to be available from March.

20MPH schemes

The Highways & Transport Committee approved the changes to the Council's policy on 20MPH speed limits. The proposed timetable for applications for funding for new 20MPH speed limits is as follows: Go 'live' with application process on-line for new schemes in February 2023 with applications between February and April 2023. Prioritization of the submitted schemes will take place in May to June 2023 with Committee report for approval in July 2023 and thereafter programming and delivery of schemes from August.

King Charles III coronation street parties

Cambridgeshire County Council has published guidance for local groups seeking to organise street parties and highways events to mark the coronation of King Charles III in May 2023. All street party applications must be received by the County Council at least eight weeks in advance (Friday 10 March 2023) via the Council's website. Highway Events applications must be submitted at least twelve weeks in advance (Friday 10 February 2023). More information about the process can be found at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roadsand-pathways/highway-events/coronation-events>

POPs in WUDS (I know!): Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) are found in various Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS) such as sofas and upholstered dining chairs. Such materials should not be landfilled. The law against landfilling of POPs was introduced in 2007, but the Environment Agency recently announced it would become more rigorous in its enforcement. The Environment Agency announced in August 2022 that it would soon expect councils to cease landfilling upholstered seating, and instead to incinerate it. It published its Final Regulatory Position Statements on this matter on Monday 19 December 2022, with implementation starting on Sunday 1 January 2023. The short notice over Christmas has provided little time to organise incineration capacity (which we do not use here in Cambridgeshire) and is a perfect example of the damage that stupid decisions made by third party organizations can do.

The good news is that after a short period of frenzied activity by Councillors and officers an interim solution for accepting waste items such as sofas, upholstered chairs, cushions, and beanbags at all recycling centers has been agreed; and so bulky waste collections offered by all of the county's City and District Councils can resume.

Government settlement: Just before Christmas the Government issued its 'provisional local government finance settlement'—the annual indication to councils of the money they will have available for local services next year. The Government proposes that Cambridgeshire County Council's 'core

spending power' (the overall revenue funding available for council services) should increase by 9.5 per cent. Unfortunately however that is less than the current rate of inflation, so overall it will buy less. Half of the 9.5 per cent is from the council's power to raise council tax—in other words, the Government expects local tax payers to shoulder a lot of the extra costs.

For the District Council the settlement is somewhat better than expected. New Homes Bonus stays and SCDC will get more than we thought from the Rural Settlement Grant as well as from Business Rates. Council tax is likely to be increased by £5 for a band D house (equivalent to 3.5%) which represents a reduction in income with inflation running above 10%. Council house rent will also need to increase by the maximum of 7% in order for us to continue delivering the new council house building programme though housing benefit does increase in line with inflation so 40% of tenants will not be affected by the increase.

The Police & Crime Commissioner advises that with the current cost-of-living pressures impacting on people's incomes "asking you to contribute more to police funding is not something I want to do." but proceeds to do so in any case because "inflation applies to policing as well – with police vehicles, fuel and training all costing more than they did this time last year" thus proposing a 19p weekly increase (for Band A properties), 29p for Band D properties.

Business planning for the next financial year continues.

Flooding: A new highway flooding tool is being used by the County to focus on a number of smaller flood locations to ensure we achieve the broadest impact across the road network and communities as quickly as possible. We started works in November at the first of the 50 locations including Station Road, Steeple Morden, Chapel Hill in Haslingfield and Potton Road St Neots – often requiring the existing system to be fully cleaned out with minor repairs to pipes or new grips cut to get water off the road and into the ditches and watercourses.

Adaptive Grants: Cambs Home Improvement Agency (HIA) has a range of grants available to people with disabilities living in South Cambridgeshire to help adapt homes. This may be particularly relevant to those who are elderly, vulnerable or have family members with disabilities as well as friends or neighbours.

The Disabled Facilities Grant is a mandatory Government grant aimed at people with disabilities and older people on low incomes or low-income benefits, which helps towards the costs of making changes to their home to allow them to continue living there safely and comfortably. Each year Cambs HIA enables around 300 older people and people with disabilities to adapt their homes. Although some work such as ramps, stairlifts, specialist toilets, automated door entry systems and level access showers require an Occupational Therapist's referral, other work such as new boilers, roofing repairs, new doors and windows do not. The agency can help homeowners or those in housing association properties make a wide variety of adaptations and repairs (www.cambshia.org). We can also help self-funders who are unable to organise and oversee the work themselves. You can reach Cambs HIA colleagues at hia@cambshia.org or take a look at their Facebook page ([Cambs Home Improvement Agency | Cambourne | Facebook](#)) for more info.

Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Fund: Village halls in England can now apply for grants to improve and modernise their facilities through the [Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Fund](#). Village halls interested in applying for this national scheme can request grants from £7,500 to £75,000, and up to a maximum of 20 per cent of eligible project costs. Capital grants will be allocated to support infrastructure improvements, the refurbishment of facilities, such as kitchens and toilets, and measures to improve energy efficiency. The application window opened just before Christmas and will close on 20 January 2023. Successful applicants being able to draw on the funding from April 2023.

Road Closures: Anglian Water will close Mill Street Gamlingay for a new sewer relay across the road to prevent blockages between 20/03/2023 and 28/03/2023. South Street Litlington will be closed on 28/03/2023 for a new pole for Openreach to be put up. Station Road Steeple Morden will be closed between 02/02/2023 and 06/02/2023 at Flitton's Farm to allow for new water connections.

A428 Dualling & Black Cat Roundabout: The highways Agency has sent a message as follows: We are disappointed to let you know that we won't be starting construction on the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet scheme this month like we had initially planned. Planning permission was granted by the Secretary of State back in August 2022 and we have been busy preparing for construction.

However Transport Action Network (TAN) submitted an application to the High Court for permission for a judicial review of the Secretary of State's decision to grant the A428 Development Consent Order. They are challenging the Secretary of State's decision on the grounds of biodiversity, need for the scheme and climate change. The court is expected to decide whether the claim can proceed to a full hearing, and on

what grounds. We were hoping a decision on the application could be made before the end of the year but the decision is now looking as though it will happen early 2023. As this is an ongoing legal case we can't provide any further information. However, we are continuing to assess the impact and will provide you with further updates as quickly as possible.

Steeple Morden Post Office: The Post Office has advised that following the resignation of the postmaster and the withdrawal of the premises for Post Office use, Steeple Morden PO will be closing temporarily on Tuesday 31 January 2023. Looking after a nationwide network of Post Office services, the PO have a responsibility to make sure every service makes the best possible use of resources, while ensuring customers can still access products and services (which importantly includes banking). Currently there are limited retail options in Steeple Morden from which to operate a Post Office service but the PO will continue to work to find a solution for the local community.

Gamlingay Footpath 10: Following the statutory process CCC confirms no objections to the new routing were received and the Order creating/moving the footpath has been confirmed. The final stage is for the County to check it has been built to the correct adoptable standard after which the process is complete.

Relas (Reject Luton Airport Stacking): Relas is holding a further public meeting to discuss the new flight paths into Luton. It will be at Lt Gransden Village Hall, 7.30pm on February 23rd. In the meantime please continue with your objections & complaints to noise@ltn.aero on any excess noise and disturbance. Remember to copy in your local Parish and District Councils to all objections/correspondence to Luton Airport. In your complaints to Luton Airport, you are encouraged to refer to the sub-standard consultation process and the poor design of AD6 which pollutes air further, by lengthening flight times. There were no mention of night flights in the consultation documents. Refer to the current poor design of AD6 and the need to rethink before it is made permanent. For instance, Relas have been made aware that the sudden screeching and howling sound experienced under the flight path is due to pilots braking suddenly, on instructions from Luton Airport for a rapid descent over a short distance. This phenomenon was also omitted from the consultation document.

Cam Vale Bus User Group - what people said: Three December meetings of the Cam Vale Bus User Group, which covers the area served by the 17 and 915 buses, resulted in a strong consensus around basics for an improved bus service for our area, which has been submitted as the Group's response to the landmark 'Making Connections' consultation on the future of travel options in the Greater Cambridge area.

It was not common knowledge that government's refusal to award any support for Cambridgeshire's Bus Improvement Plan was due to 'insufficient commitment to road charging.' No road charging, no government support for buses.

All buses in our area are now subsidized from a limited pool of public funds which must be raised via council tax. It's not enough to provide what people need.

'Making Connections' proposes a low bus fare (£2 here) and doubling the current timetable. A Cambridge congestion charge after an improved bus network and new active travel links are embedded, would fund the bus network into the future. Initial set-up investment in a bus network would come from the Greater Cambridge Partnership, a time-limited body set up to disperse government funding for this growth area.

The Cam Vale Group consensus was that bus services should:-

- **be redesigned, rather than replicate long-standing routes as is proposed, in order to attract new users:** commuters to education, training and employment; evening and weekend travellers for leisure and social life; and daytime travellers to health appointments, business and household needs
- introduce new multiple daily links to all local rail stations - Ashwell and Mordens, Royston, Meldreth, Shepreth, Foxton - properly synchronized with train services
- provide direct links to Cambridge from all villages for morning and evening commutes
- introduce quicker, earlier and later access to Royston as nearest market town; and coordinated with North Hertfordshire bus services
- integrated single ticketing to protect low overall journey costs
- instill traveller confidence through reliability, good availability of timetables in variety of formats, with real time information and contact number for emergencies
- be served by shelters and seats at bus stops, and toilets at transport interchanges

The consultation closed on December 23. If you'd like to join the Cam Vale Bus User Group please let Susan know.

Free Health Checks, Melbourn Hub - Meridian Primary Care Network GP Surgeries: Anyone can drop into the Melbourn Hub on Monday mornings for a free health check. Get your blood pressure checked or just have a chat if something's worrying you. This fantastic new service is sponsored by the Meridian Primary Care Network, including surgeries in Melbourn, Harston, Royston, Comberton and Bourn. <http://melbournhub.co.uk/health-at-the-hub>

Question for my health visitor please about my baby or child: Parents of young children with a health visitor question can get in touch with the Cambridgeshire Healthy Child Programme any time, via phone or text:

Call 0300 0295050

Text 07520 649887

And much more practical information is available here:

<https://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/what-we-do/children-young-people-health-services-cambridgeshire/cambridgeshire-0-19-healthy-child-programme>

Cost of Living - financial support: From Council tax support to heat, food and free holiday activities, there is loads of useful information on financial support from a variety of organizations collated by South Cambs District Council, here: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support/>

Go Fund Me - electric blankets and slow cookers: The Go Fund Me page has been launched with money raised being added to Council support for people just about managing. The funding the Council has pledged could see around 400 people supported with free electric blankets and slow cookers; more can be done if donations are received.

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/scdcccstofliving>

The Council is first writing to people who receive a 75-85% Council Tax discount as they have been identified as potentially in greatest need of support. This group may be expanded depending on the number of donations received. The first group of people eligible will have three weeks to claim the support offered by completing an online form. A phone number will be provided for people without internet access to call and go through the form with a member of Council staff.

If more budget becomes available after three weeks due to donations, the scheme will be expanded to more people on lower brackets of council tax discounts. The Go Fund Me page is part of a wide range of support worth about £400,000 being put in place by the Council to support residents.

Ukraine – new hosts for guests needed: Cambridge and South Cambs have between them about 500 hosts for Ukraine guests. With the war in Ukraine continuing, the six-month hosting arrangements have needed to be renewed, though not all hosts are in a position to do so. Anyone who might be able to provide a spare room for a guest from Ukraine is asked to get in touch with SCDC, or please contact any of us and we'll point you in the right direction.

Grants available: riparian owners and ditch maintenance: The County Council is offering a 'riparian grant' to help with maintenance of privately owned watercourses, which would benefit adjoining networks for overall community drainage benefit.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water/community-flood-action-programme/watercourse-maintenance-grant>

Electric vehicle charging point grant: The Electric Vehicle (EV) Charge Point Grant is available to fund installation of Electric Vehicle Charge Points for use by the public, and related works, in the car parks of community buildings and village halls within South Cambridgeshire. The deadline for 2022/2023 applications is 31 March 2023:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/climate-emergency-and-nature/grants-funding-and-community-support/electric-vehicle-charge-point-grant/>

South Cambs Magazine on-line: You can read the quarterly South Cambs Magazine online:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/the-south-cambs-magazine/>

South Cambs CEO visit to Bassingbourn and Litlington: It was good to welcome SCDC CEO Liz Watts to Litlington and Bassingbourn in early December. We met parish council chairs, talked about planning issues, the long-term value of the mobile warden scheme, transport challenges in this rural area, health services on the county border, orientation to Royston and border issues, support for community buildings, police issues, and local schools. We also enjoyed some of the public footpath links through both villages.

Your Councillors are here to help you. Please do feel free to contact us with comments, questions, problems or complaints. County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley on 01767 651982 or

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@scamb.gov.uk
We hope we can help but if we can't we are likely to know someone who can!

Finance:

Bank Statement: This was received after the agenda was published, but Clerk felt it should be brought to the Council's attention. Balance at the end of December - £5976-15.

Charles Arnold-Baker: The grant cheque for the purchase of this book has been received and sent to the bank. As the cheque has now been banked and the expenditure for this agreed at the December meeting, Clerk will now place the order with SLCC.

Coronation: Clerk had received information about a Coronation mug for King Charles III. It was decided not to purchase these as the cost is prohibitive.

Precept: The Clerk had prepared documentation to hopefully assist Councillors with their decision on the precept for 2023 - 2024. Much discussion followed, and the final amounts decided upon are as below:-

Insurance	£500-00
Rent	£200-00
Clerk	£1800-00 (includes salary, IT use and out of pocket expenses)
Audit	£75-00
Subs	£80-00
Cemetery and Village	£1100-00
War memorial	£500-00
Books and Training	£50-00
Section 137 and Contingency	£1200-00
Community Groups	£400-00

The financial requirements for the year 2023 - 2024 total £5905-00. It was proposed by the Chairman that Council precepts for this amount and all were in favour. The Clerk will pass this information on to SCDC as required. She also thanked Council for reviewing her annual salary.

Planning: None received

Items for next agenda: Village map

Date of the next meeting: Wednesday 15th February 2023 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm

As there was no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Signed

Date