

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

Apologies: Mr Wenman - stuck in traffic, Mr Wheeler - unable to attend, Mr Buchanan - in a meeting, Mrs Sole - still at work.

Present: Mr Barnes, Ms Newland, Mr Sole, the Clerk and three members of the public.

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

Declarations of Interest: None received.

Matters Arising and Village Issues:

Community Report:

Macmillan Coffee Morning: Ms Newland thanked everyone who attended, made cakes for or donated to the Macmillan Coffee Morning, held in the Reading Room on 13th October. The total raised currently stands at £250-00 with some to come. She also asked if Council would consider funding the rental for the event, as it was for a worthy charity. This was agreed and Ms Newland will put the final total in the November magazine.

Luton Airport Flight Paths: Council sent in their letter of objection to the flight paths - the response received is below:-

Dear Croydon Parish Council,

Many thanks for your recent email noise report to the Flight Operations team at London Luton Airport. I can confirm this complaint has been logged accordingly within our complaints database.

Earlier last year (February 2022) we implemented an airspace change which would have changed the tracks from aircraft in your area, this was a co-sponsored proposal from both NATS and London Luton Airport. The aim of this airspace change was to separate Luton's arrival routes from Stansted's arrival routes. The new routes were consulted upon from October 2020 - February 2021. We then submitted the airspace change proposal to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in June 2021 with them granting approval in November 2021.

Furthermore, regarding the altitude of aircraft in your area, we check this daily as part of our ongoing monitoring. I have looked at recent data and can confirm that most aircraft are at the required altitude or higher. There may be some aircraft lower than 7,000ft and this is due to the weather conditions on the day. Aircraft use altimeters which is an instrument used to measure the altitude of an aircraft above a fixed level. This level is based on barometric pressure used to interpret how high they are - air pressure reduces with height, so the lower the pressure, the higher an aircraft altimeter will indicate. However, the weather also changes the air pressure so it may be slightly higher or slightly lower depending on the air pressure in the area, at the time.

When redesigning airspace we must follow the government guidance, this is currently to overfly the least number of people and therefore typically routes will overfly rural areas. I understand that this may cause more disturbance due to the lower ambient noise level, but we must comply with the government guidance in this regard. We will shortly be conducting noise monitoring around the area and once complete will create a community noise monitoring report.

Aircraft in your area will be receiving individual instructions from Air Traffic Control and therefore may not be at the same altitude or follow the same track each time. There are no set arrival routes or set altitudes for arrivals into Luton. The track and altitude will be based on other aircraft in the airspace at the time and this typically disperses the aircraft tracks over a wider area. This was the preferred option within the consultation (Option 1 in the consultation document).

There is a 7-stage process for changing airspace, the final stage is a post implementation review (PIR) this is for 12 months after implementation. During this period, we collect data on complaints, tracks and

altitude of aircraft on this route. This will be provided to the Civil Aviation Authority (as regulators of the airspace) who will decide if the route can be made permanent or if changes are required. You can find out more about the Post Implementation Review on the airspace change portal.

We do recognise that our operations can have an impact on neighbouring communities, and we of course have every sympathy with those affected and I would like to apologise for the disturbance you have experienced.

This seems to translate into "we are just following Government guidelines and changing the flight paths and heights according to the weather."

SpeedWatch volunteers: Clerk circularised the seven Speedwatch volunteers, and only two replied stating that they would still like to be involved. Neither wanted to be a co-ordinator. Until further volunteers come forward there will not be sufficient people to operate a group.

Extra Long Litter Picker and Signs:

The litter pickers are at the Clerk's residence awaiting collection. Mr Buchanan was making enquiries about additional litter picking signs, as requested by the team. As he was absent from the meeting this item will be deferred until November.

Lower Road: As at the September meeting, Council is still waiting for the results of the fatal accident from the Police and Highways Investigation Team have both reported. Until these have been received, no permanent signage or speed restrictions will be made, although a large bumpy road sign has suddenly appeared on Larkins Road. As Cllr Kindersley was not in the meeting no further information was available. If the reports indicate that further signage would be beneficial, then Council may like to apply to Local Highway Improvements.

Local Highways Improvements: Clerk has completed the survey, indicating that Croydon would like to apply for an improvement (or two). These are a Croydon sign for the top of Croydon Hill and re-siting of a 30mph sign in the village that is obscured by a telegraph pole. Council has to contribute to the costs of these improvements.

Website recurring problem: Clerk contacted Sanders and Jay to have the problem corrected, but their standard hourly rate is now £100 + VAT. The work has been done and it was proposed by Mr Barnes that a cheque for £120-00 should be raised. All in favour. A very comprehensive report on the website problem was provided; unfortunately both the Council's members who may understand it were not in attendance. This and a possible annual contract will be discussed again in November.

CCC Weed Killing: This appears to be a money-saving initiative, in the guise of CCC's environmental goals. It was not communicated to district and parish councils before implementation.

CCC Weed Spraying Policy

In April 2023, the Council changed its operational policy in relation to the removal of weeds. The purpose of the change was to achieve two goals;

1. To improve the natural environment and biodiversity by reducing the use of chemicals that can have a detrimental environmental impact.

2. To reduce the running costs of the operations as part of the overall need to reduce costs across the Council as part of its budget planning process.

The policy change moved the Council away from carrying out cyclic chemical spraying of road edges, channels and footpaths to a risk-based approach where we will remove weeds where they present a hazard to road users. We will however pre-treat weeds ahead of any works that we undertake such as resurfacing or slurry sealing.

Generally, weeds are not a safety issue for road users. They can be unsightly but do not affect their safety unless they build up significantly to become a trip or visibility hazard. When we are made aware of concerns by the public and communities, we will assess the risk the reported weeds present and then determine what action to take.

We are, however, assessing the effect of the policy change and how it was implemented. We do recognise that the County Council should have engaged with its partners in district and parish councils more effectively at the time when this policy change was being considered, and then when it was implemented, and that is something we wish to improve upon.

In addition, now we are coming to the end of the growing season we are reviewing the impact of the change in both rural and urban areas. We will be considering changes to our approach when we have the

assessment results and presenting this to members so that this can be considered further as we prepare the budget for future years.

In undertaking this review, we will engage with district and parish councils to better understand the impacts of the policy and what changes we could make to improve our approach in the future. We will therefore be writing to all parish councils and districts with a survey which will ask for evidence to be provided as to what the impact has been in their areas and how this has created additional risk and safety issues on the highway.

I appreciate the time taken by our partners in highlighting this issue and I want to provide assurance that we wish to engage with you as we undertake the review of this policy change.

In the meantime, where there are locations reported to the Council where weed growth is seen to be a problem, these will be inspected and, if required, action will be taken to remove them.

Within a few days of the PC meeting a road sweeper went through. It did clear the gutters of debris, but the weeds growing between the road and the kerb were not removed. These are SCDC's responsibility and not CCC's. There is further information on weeds in County Councillor's Kindersley report.

QA Gully flooding: This does not now seem to be a problem. Gullies are cleaned every two years and Croydon's were cleaned in September last year. The gentleman I spoke with in CCC Highways suggested that it may have happened during a very heavy downpour.

Speed at the Arrington Entry into Croydon: A resident has reported that the 40mph to 30 mph is being ignored by many motorists, making it unsafe to open a car door when traffic is going past. Unfortunately, there does not now seem to be enough volunteers to form a SpeedWatch group and any site a group may operate from has to be approved by the Police.

Follow-Up information

Gmail addresses: It was reported that six Councillors now have a gmail address. Only Mrs Sole's needed now.

District Councillor's Report for The Mordens Ward SCDC - September 2023

4-day working week

In September, South Cambs District Council received a second letter from local government minister Lee Rowley MP asking to stop the trial. I have continued to raise my concerns about the 4-day week, especially the financial and reputational cost to residents.

The reports suggest that the administration has saved on agency fees so far by filling nine of 23 'hard-to-fill' posts – helped by the incentive of a 4-day week. This should be considered in light of the full facts and figures, which show that £189,153 extra was spent in the first 3 months of the 4-day week trial. These figures can be seen below:

Q4 2021/22 (without 4-day week)	£1,148,728
Q4 2022/23 (with 4-day week)	£1,337,881

The estimated costs for the 4-day week for bin collections are also higher. This is due to the need to recruit two more bin crews with two more electric bin lorries. These costs are summarised below: -

	3-month trial	Year 1	Year 2
Cost	£66,000 (£33,000 per council for SCDC and CCC)	£132,000	£207,000

I am currently scrutinising these figures; I will continue to raise these concerns to ensure residents are getting value for money.

I do not believe it is right that 80% of elected councillors have not been given the opportunity to vote on the 4-day week. With something like this, which has a huge impact on all residents, it should be decided in a way where all have a voice.

Above all, I want to make sure residents are getting the services they deserve from their local council. At present, I cannot see any reliable proof of improved service. Now, more than ever, we need more working hours, more council officers and an even stronger work ethic – not fewer working hours, with residents paying for five days' work but only getting 4 days' work.

It will not have passed many by that the District Council has faced bad publicity of late around the 4-day week in relation to an 'independent' report that was edited by a council officer before it was presented to the public. I have seen a copy of the original report and the changes made. I must confess that I am shocked by what I've seen and am deeply concerned about the evaporating trust between residents and the council.

Changes to bin collection dates: As a result of the 4-day week being extended to our refuse collection service and a route reconfiguration, there are changes to bin collections for over 80% of households in South Cambs. Bins will no longer be collected on Mondays. Everyone affected by the change should have had a letter explaining your new collection day. By clicking the link below and putting in your postcode, you can find your new bin collection calendar for South Cambs.

www.scambs.gov.uk/recycling-and-bins/bin-collection-changes-from-september/

You can also click below to find out more general information about bin changes in Cambridgeshire.

www.scambs.gov.uk/binchanges

Road charging: At the most recent meeting of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, road charging was yet again raised for a debate and vote as part of the Local Transport Plan. This was despite leading politicians saying the proposed £5 per day Cambridge congestion charge would be taken off the table at the beginning of September.

The Plan was not approved by the Combined Authority as Peterborough Authority essentially had a veto. But road charging is still a contentious political issue in Cambridgeshire. The South Cambs representative at the Combined Authority meeting was clear that all options including road charging needed to be on the table and that there did need to be restrictions on cars. I have consistently spoken out and voted against a Congestion Charge for Cambridge and will continue to campaign against it. I do not believe putting extra financial pressure on working people is appropriate especially in the current climate.

Fly tipping: South Cambridgeshire District Council receives around 1,600 reports per year regarding fly tipping. The Council is urging residents to do the right thing and properly get rid of their rubbish in the following ways:

- Consider giving it away for free on Facebook marketplace, Gumtree or taking to your local charity shop.
- If possible, reuse, repair or recycle your items before getting rid of them.
- Ensure you choose a reputable registered waste carrier disposal service.
- South Cambridgeshire District Council can arrange for collection of bulky items for many common household goods. We collect a maximum of nine items per collection. Up to three items can be booked for the minimum charge of £32.50. Additional items are then £5.50 each.
- Take your rubbish to one of Cambridgeshire's Household Recycling Centres.

I would like to encourage anyone that sees fly tipping to report it via the web link below.

www.scambs.gov.uk/recycling-and-bins/report-or-request/report-environmental-issues/

Clr Heather Williams

SCDC The Mordens Ward

Tel: 07885 774 775

Email: cllr.williamsh@scambs.gov.uk

Website: www.cllrheatherwilliams.co.uk

Gamlingay Division Councillors Report – South Cambridgeshire District Council & Cambridgeshire County Council - October 2023

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: No sooner had we submitted last month's notes than the Making Connection project started to waver. Four long weeks later and to the satisfaction of some and the sadness of others the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) has decided not to proceed to the next stage. Collectively it was decided that while the aims of Making Connections to make travelling in and around Cambridge simpler and faster by saving time and money and easing congestion offering better, fairer, and greener travel choices were important the lack of political consensus meant there was no choice. This means the Congestion Charge element of the proposals is dead.

There is no Plan B. Officers will now focus on other areas of the City Access programme looking at issues such as resident parking, road hierarchy and freight consolidation. This is in addition to the other infrastructure projects which include 150km of Greenways, innovative busway schemes from Waterbeach to Cambridge and Cambourne to Cambridge as well as the significant improvements to Milton Road and Newmarket Road.

The implications for Gamlingay Division parishes are firstly that the high quality bus services across Southern Cambridgeshire with the target of one bus an hour for all will not be delivered as the congestion charge was going to pay for it. Secondly, largescale developments such as at Bourn Airfield which need to demonstrate the future residents will have access to high quality public transport before any further planning consents are issued are looking problematic. This in turn puts the targets of the Local Plan in doubt the implications for which are that we could conceivably see an inability to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply – which means policies designed to restrict growth especially in villages fall away – and that's a bonanza for opportunistic development. If you want to see what that means take a look at Waterbeach or Melbourn which both suffered this very badly back in 2018.

The last implication is that it underlines that local government in this part of the county badly needs reform – parish, district, county council plus the Combined Authority, the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership and so on means too much is spent and not enough achieved.

Phlebotomy Services at Gamlingay: The communication to patients from the Surgery has caused much concern. The bottom line is that taking blood is not part of the core NHS GP contract. Many surgeries, indeed whole areas, send all their patients to the nearest hospital or outpatient clinic to have bloods taken. Of course this is extremely difficult for those with no access to a car (see above) and so these changes are having a negative impact. Clearly, the most desirable answer would be a fully-funded service that makes not just good patient-service sense but is also financially viable for the practice. In reality, almost always, the cost of doing something in hospital is vastly more expensive than doing it in practices, so the decision to pull funding from a practice that results in a shift to hospital-delivered care is not only less convenient for patients but more costly in overall terms for the NHS – and that is before we start thinking about the carbon impact of all those additional journeys.

Bassingbourn VC School Transport: It was extremely unfortunate that the bus service to BVC was cut from Gamlingay at almost the last moment before the school term began. Even more annoying was that parents had made a choice to send their children out of catchment on the basis that a service was being operated. As with all commercial bus routes they are at risk of changing economic circumstances and the operator simply was not going to deliver a loss making service; leaving some families high and dry.

Electric Blankets: South Cambridgeshire District Council will shortly be offering 532 residents the opportunity to claim a free electric blanket (also known as a heated throw) as a cost-effective alternative to central heating. Residents selected to qualify will be those who are (as of 1 July 2023) claiming Council Tax Support and at least one of Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment (PIP) mobility element at the enhanced rate or Disability Living Allowance (DLA) mobility component at the higher rate.

Parish Profiles – Cambridgeshire Insight: The County Council hosts this extraordinary website containing demographic detail about our communities from parish to parish. Data is drawn from the Census and helps to inform local authority decisions particularly in relation to the wider determinants of health. Google Cambridgeshire Insight.

Action on Cambridgeshire Highways: As a result of our changing weather patterns one third of the county's roads are affected by peat soil or clay soil damage. This equates to 1660 kilometres of road - approximately 36% of the county's entire road network. We have launched a plan to tackle the deterioration to keep road users safe as they travel across the county and protect rural communities and local businesses. Underlying peat or clay soil causes damage to the road network when peat or clay subsides, shrinks and expands according to weather conditions and seasonal changes causing roads to deteriorate, undulation to occur and cracks and potholes to appear.

Funding of up to £5 million per year will be needed to manage the affected Cambridgeshire's road network effectively and mitigate the impact of road deterioration on top of an initial investment of an estimated £300 million to carry out major repairs and reduce the need for further road closures and disruption. The vast majority of these roads are in the north of the county but locally Hatley Road Gamlingay is included as well as Lower Road Croydon, Wrestlingworth Road Tadlow, the A603 between Wimpole and Arrington, Wimpole Park Road in Orwell and Potton Road Guilden Morden.

Barrington - Foxton Cycleway: As part of the community contribution from the new development on Haslingfield Road, Barrington, the developer Redrow must provide a new cycleway from Barrington to

Foxton station alongside the quarry railway. Redrow presented their detailed plans to Barrington residents in September. The cycleway will run on the west side of the railway line from Haslingfield Road to Glebe Road and the on the east side of the line for down to Foxton, with a new bridge over the river. This route avoids impacting existing houses as much as possible.

Preparatory work will begin this autumn and construction will take place during 2024. We will then have a direct and safe route that provides a link both to Foxton station and to the A10 cycle path.

Update on Cambridge South East Transport phase 2 and Foxton Travel Hub: The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) is facing tough decisions in the face of inflation levels. With the cost of construction materials up by over 40 percent, the GCP has been re-evaluating its programme as the total programme costs rise beyond levels of its government grant and other income. The impact of inflation on the GCP's programme shows costs have increased by 20% – 30%. As a result Phase two of the Cambridge South East Transport project – a new dedicated busway, travel hub and active travel route connecting Cambridge with communities to the south-east of the city - will be 'paused'.

In addition the Foxton Travel Hub project - profoundly unpopular locally - will be paused. The GCP will develop both projects to a point where they are 'planning ready' whilst seeking alternative sources of funding to enable them to be delivered in the future.

SEND Information Hub: Support for parents and carers of children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) in Cambridgeshire is available through the SEND Information Hub which contains guidance and resources for children of all ages, featuring topics like early years, education, and preparing for adulthood. There are also specific sections on health, finding the right support, and social care - giving families unlimited access to information that can help them feel empowered and educated on what is available locally. send.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Gamlingay Pre-School: The County Council has granted consent for a temporary portacabin adjacent to GVP which is in the process on being installed. The consent includes an informative asking the community to consider extending the 20mph zone around the area and the Parish Council has already started consulting on this with residents. Please engage with this if you have views for or against extending the 20mph zone! Meanwhile the search continues for a site in or adjacent to the village for a permanent location for the Pre-School. If you know of a site that may be suitable the please do get in touch.

New Bin Collection Days: The move to the new 4 day per week bin collection routes has gone well. Almost everyone clocked onto their new collection day with only a few roads missed across the District which were collected first thing the following day. The amount of calls into the call centre was under the estimated amount as was the number of reports of missed bins. The advantage of not collecting bins on Mondays is that we avoid all the confusion caused by Bank Holidays. The waste teams will be carry on their other duties on a Monday including commercial waste collections and litter bins and street cleaning.

Planning Service: Last year South Cambs spent £2 million (of your money) on agency staff, mainly in the planning service where there is a huge shortage of planners. This time last year the bill for this had already reached £249,000. This year thanks to the 4 Day Week trial attracting permanent staff to join us this bill is down to £24,000. Full details of our 4 Day Week trial are on our website along with an FAQ which is regularly updated.

Incentive Scheme for Landlords: South Cambs has just launched an incentive scheme to encourage private landlords to rent their properties to our Ukrainian guests who want or need to move on from their hosts into private rental properties. There is a generous financial incentive for doing this and details are on the website.

How do you recycle your household plastics? To be in with the chance of winning a £50 voucher, take the Pledge2Recycle survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/QBCK2XL> and share your thoughts. The survey is being conducted by RECOUP, the UK's leading independent authority and trusted voice on plastics resource efficiency and recycling. Learn more about how you can better recycle your household waste with Pledge2Recycle at <https://pledge2recycle.co.uk/>

Sustainable Farming Incentive 2023: Applications are now open for the Sustainable Farming Incentive. The SFI pays farmers for taking actions that support food production, farm productivity and resilience, whilst protecting the environment. More information at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-application-dates-for-sustainable-farming-incentive-2023>

Help to insulate your home: If your home has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D to G, and if you are in council tax band A-D (in England) you may qualify for cheaper (or even free) insulation. The government has launched a £1 billion scheme to help some families insulate their homes. Families in

lower council tax bands with less energy-efficient homes will be offered upgrades such as roof, loft or cavity wall insulation. You can use an online checker for the scheme to find out if you are eligible. The tool will ask a series of questions – including how you heat your home, whether your home has solid or cavity walls, and if you are receiving any benefits. You can be a homeowner, landlord or tenant (either renting privately or from a housing association). If you're a tenant, speak to your landlord before you apply. You'll need their permission before any insulation can be installed. <https://www.gov.uk/apply-great-british-insulation-scheme>

A separate online checker has also been launched for the Home Upgrade Grant, which will help people in off-gas-grid homes with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of D to G. The grant provides energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating to households in England. <https://www.gov.uk/apply-home-upgrade-grant> If you use the online checkers you will then be referred to either your energy supplier, for support from the Energy Company Obligation programme and Great British Insulation Scheme, or your council for the Home Upgrade Grant.

Smart street lamps: Cambridgeshire is one of six areas to be granted funding to test smart street lamps that can house EV charging hubs and boost wireless coverage including 5G. The County Council has been awarded £220,000 to install 'smart poles' on which to host various smart city infrastructure.

Open Radio Access Network: Cambridgeshire County Council has also been awarded £6,523,645, plus £2,699,740 of commercial funding - a total funding amount of £9,223,385 - to trial new mobile technology to improve mobile connectivity in busy locations where many people are trying to use mobile devices at the same time.

House Exchange: South Cambs is making it simpler and easier for council house tenants to arrange exchanges with other council house tenants. Full details are on the website but if you are experiencing difficulties please do come and talk to us.

Weeds and street sweeping: The County Council's Highways & Transport Committee is to take note of issues raised by communities with regard to the relationship between weeds and street sweeping. Residents have complained about debris from unswept streets (district council) being caught up in weeds from uncleared gutters and gullies (county council); and county council officers are now discussing this with district council officers about how better to align management of our streets, kerbs, gullies and gutters. On a related note, most of the Division parishes will have their gullies cleaned out week commencing October 21st.

More 20MPH schemes get the green light: Twenty more 20MPH schemes across East Cambs, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire have been given the go-ahead in the latest round of funding from the County Council including Orwell. The County Council is keen to find additional funding to increase the number of applications it can support. With eighty-eight applications received, it is clear that road safety measures are very popular with residents and local communities. Gamlingay Parish Council is currently consulting on this as well.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority: The long-awaited revision of the Combined Authority's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough was vetoed at the September meeting of the Combined Authority Board. The Leader of Peterborough City Council exercised his right of veto to scupper the plan—apparently to the complete surprise of his own Chief Executive, and without speaking in the meeting to explain why. The Plan had already been delayed from the July meeting of the Board, when Peterborough had threatened to veto it. After the September meeting, Peterborough's Leader suggested that his vote had something to do with Combined Authority plans to force congestion charging and low traffic neighbourhoods onto Peterborough. However, this would be impossible even if anyone wished to, as Peterborough City Council is the highways authority for the city and thus responsible for any such decisions.

Meanwhile, the Board decided to approve the extension of 51 bus service contracts to March 2025, and of the Ting 'demand responsive transport' contract in Huntingdonshire to March 2024. The Board also agreed to commission a review by an independent auditor of the bus franchising assessment - a step forward towards the aim of improving bus services across Cambridgeshire.

Lithium-ion Batteries: The Scrutiny Committee at the Fire Authority heard from officers about the dangers posed by Lithium-ion batteries which are used in scooters, mobility chairs, electric bikes and many other household items. Thermal runaway can cause them to explode and once they have it is vital to get out of reach of the 'smoke' and flames. Most events are caused by cheap replacement batteries and cables and the Fire Service recommends that any charging should be done during the day and preferably in a garage or similar - obviously not ideal. Please look out for publicity campaigns which will give much more detailed information - in the meantime treat any charging as potentially dangerous.

Your Councillors are always ready to help. Please do not hesitate to contact County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley on 01767 651982 or skindersley@hotmail.com or write to the Manor Barn, East Hatley, SG19 3JA District Councillor Bridget Smith (Gamlingay Ward, SCDC) is on 07729 836449 or Cllr.BridgetSmith@scambs.gov.uk Please do feel free to contact us with comments, questions, problems or complaints. We hope we can help but if we can't we are likely to know someone who can!

Correspondence:

Electoral Register: Alterations circulated to Councillors, and the register will be updated.

Highway Events: November's Highlights

Many Remembrance Sunday events in larger parishes.

Please remember details of all highway events can be found on

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/highway-events/>

Christmas Bazaar: Council received a letter from the PCC Secretary, enquiring if Council would be able to fund the rental for the Bazaar on 2nd December. Council considered this and agreed to cover the rental again this year.

Reading Room Rental for Village Events: Council was asked to clarify which Community groups it is happy to fund. Council already funds the Croydon Café and will fund the Tuesday Group and the History Group, when they are operating. Each group will be responsible for recording its usage of the Reading Room. This does not set a precedent for any village groups that may form in the future, and each group will need to apply to the Council if they would like their rental funding to be considered.

CPRE - East-West Rail: CPRE is surprised that, with the cancellation of the HS2 northern leg, the decision was not made to cancel East-West Rail between Bedford and Cambridge.

Cambridge Approaches is concerned about the East-West Rail plans for the southern entry into Cambridge. Cambridge Approaches has a website that is very informative:-

<https://cambridgeapproaches.org/>

SCDC Review of Polling Districts:

We are currently undertaking a review of our polling districts in South Cambridgeshire.

All councils are required by law to keep their polling districts and places under review. Polling districts are the building blocks of electoral areas. Most of our polling districts are formed along the same boundaries as our parishes. To make the review more inclusive we are also asking for views on our polling station arrangements, including looking at accessibility of stations for disabled voters.

We are starting our review now and would like to invite parish councils to share their views.

Full details can be found on our website at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/elections/polling-district-review/>

If you wish to comment or have any questions please contact elections@scambs.gov.uk.

The consultation is open until 27 November.

Whistle Blowing Letter:

Deliberate, Serious, and On-Going Wrong-Doing at South Cambridgeshire District Council

Dear Chairs and Clerks,

Please will you forward this message to all your parish councillors? Something is very wrong at SCDC and so I am blowing the whistle I have (as loudly as I can) in the hope that shining a light into dark corners will prevent further harm.

Please see attached (i) My covering letter to Parish Councillors; (ii) My response to the decision made by the monitoring officer who claims that the CEO of SCDC has done nothing wrong by blatantly ignoring the council's own rules on the declaration of conflicts of interest; (iii) that decision (see below).

I believe it is in the public's best interest for their representatives to be clear about what is happening at their council.

I have not copied the letters received with this email but it was sent by a gentleman who is a relatively new Councillor, but has highlighted what he perceives to be breaches of standards. In particular he mentions the behaviour of the Chief Executive, in implementing a four-day week and then using the results to write a thesis. These have been well publicised.

Leader of the Council's response to the letter: The letter was addressed to the Chairman, so it is not copied into the minutes. The response is as expected, the four-day week is progressing smoothly, the offices are still open for five days and many "hard to fill" vacancies have been filled. Nothing wrong has been done.

GCP Parish Council Forum: The agenda for the meeting is:-

Welcome and Introduction's (5mins)

Themes: Industry update

- Urban Heat Island Effect (EHIE) (Professor Marialena Nikolopoulou) – 25mins/15mins questions
 - Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – (John Cornell) 20mins/10mins questions
- Open floor questions – (15mins)

As you will see from the agenda our speaker on EHIE is Marialena, here's a bit more info about her:

[Professor Marialena Nikolopoulou](#)

Councillors did not feel that any agenda item was relevant to Croydon.

Reading Room Requests: Two emails were received from the Chair of the Reading Room Trustees requesting further funding, as detailed below:-

BT £52.98 every month From May 2024

Tectonic (Lemon Booking) £ 330.00 May 2024

As you know, I have cut the grass around the beautifully restored War Memorial for many years. Despite Weed & Feed etc, the grass does not grow well due to the poor-quality soil there. Wild flowers seem to dominate and that got me thinking. Perhaps we could consider Wild Flowers around the War Memorial? Less petrol & hard work and a beautiful poppy rich area around our lovely memorial!

I contacted David Homes of Ashes to Blooms who specialise in this type of thing and he wrote to me with advice and support! Just wondered what you thought about the idea? I would love to take it forward, preparing the ground & maintaining it. If it didn't work, we could easily return to grass again..

Many thanks for your consideration.

Councillors present considered the requests and felt that decisions on this expenditure should be discussed by full Council. It would also help to know the usage of the Wi-Fi in the Reading Room. The Clerk did a quick Google before the meeting and both Sky and Vodafone business accounts were considerably cheaper than BT.

The idea of flowers around the war memorial was welcomed - the quotation provided for the 16 names from Ashes to Blooms:-

"I confirm that we would be able to provide 16 bags of 10 seed balls, at a cost of £12 per bag.

Each bag of seed balls will be presented in a cardboard box with shredded paper for protection & presentation, and will have a card tag with the soldier's name on & a set of instructions. You can see examples of the boxes at www.ashestoblooms.com.

16 x £12 = £192.00

Courier delivery = £30.00

TOTAL = £222.00"

Circulated Items:

SCDC e-bulletin

Cambridgeshire ACRE newsletter

Cambridgeshire Matters

Anthony Brown's newsletters

Net Zero six week course

NHS newsletter

SCDC weekly bulletins

Subsequent Receipts:

CCC - Steady on your feet: Together with Peterborough City Council, CCC has just launched the [Steady on your Feet](#) interactive falls self-assessment tool to help older adults understand their risk of falling and the simple steps they can take to stay active and independent. The new tool is primarily aimed at those who haven't previously had a fall but it is also aimed at people who have experienced a fall but have declined a referral for a multi-factorial falls risk assessment.

CCC is hoping that younger family members with internet access will be able to assist vulnerable elders to access and use the interactive assessment tools available.

Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement: Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are working together to create a joint Statement of Community Involvement and are inviting comments, via public consultation.

The consultation documents can be viewed:

- on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service website:
<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/about-us/statement-of-community-involvement/>
- by appointment at Cambridge City Council's Customer Service Centre: Mandela House, 4 Regent Street, Cambridge, CB2 1BY (phone 01223 457000);
- by appointment at South Cambridgeshire District Council Reception: South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6EA (phone 01954 713000);
- at Cambridge Central Library (7 Lion Yard Cambridge CB2 3QD) during normal opening hours.

Hard copies may be obtained at a charge by contacting the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service using the contact details below. If you need assistance to view the documents, or wish to discuss the consultation, please contact us using the details below.

The Councils are also holding in-person events during the consultation period, where planning officers will be available to answer questions.

How to make comments

You are encouraged to comment online - full details are available on our website at

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/about-us/statement-of-community-involvement/>

If you have difficulty commenting online, please contact the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Policy Team on 01954 713694 or email us at localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org

Alternatively, you can make comments in writing using response forms available on the Councils' websites or on request. Completed response forms should be emailed to

localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org or posted to: Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, Cambridge City Council, PO Box 700, Cambridge, CB1 0JH

Comments can be made on these documents between 9am on Wednesday 18 October and 5pm on Wednesday 27 November 2023.

All comments received during the consultation period will be published. Please refer to our privacy notice for further details, which can be found on our website.

Finance:

Bank Statement: Council has received the second instalment of the precept - £2952-50, so the balance in the current account at the end of September was £6157 - 06.

Reading Room Rental: Council received the invoice for funding the Café from April to September and for the use for Council meetings from April to December 2023. It was proposed by the Chair that cheques for £224-00 for the Café rental and £128-00 for Council rental should be raised. All in favour.

Barclays Bank: No confirmation of the third signatory has been received.

Items for next agenda:

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

As there was no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed

Date