

## **A meeting of Croydon Parish Council meeting was held on Wednesday 17th July 2024 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.**

**Apologies:** Mr Wheeler - away, Ms Newland - unwell

**Present:** Mr Barnes, Mr Sole, Mr Buchanan, Mr Wenman, Mrs Sole, Cllr Kindersley and the Clerk.

**Minutes:** of the June meeting were agreed and signed.

**Declarations of Interest:** None

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

**Community reports:** All Saints' parish church held an open morning on July 6th, when there was a chance to go up the tower and see inside the crypt, with refreshments also available. Unfortunately the weather that day was inclement, but the turnout was still good. Several villagers would like to have attended but had other arrangements, so it is hoped to hold a second open morning when (if) the weather is better.

**Community Chest:** The Tree Wardens and PCC have discussed the management of the new churchyard and the PCC would like a strimmer to use there, as soon as possible. They reported that the Tree Wardens would also like items for use there. Because the strimmer would be required this grass cutting season, the PCC has asked Council if its purchase could be funded from the Community Benefit Fund instead of the Community Chest application, as the Tree Wardens are also looking for funding from the Community Chest. Council discussed various options for the funding and it was proposed by Mr Sole and seconded by Mr Buchanan that the £439-00 funding for a strimmer would be made from the Contingency nominal. All in favour. A cheque for the requested amount of £439-00 was raised and signed.

**Footpaths:** A resident notified the Clerk of some problems with footpaths locally. The Clerk sent information regarding how to report these, which the resident has now done. A long time ago one of the then residents was the Footpaths officer in the parish. He produced a very nice footpaths map and these were available from the pub. A lot has happened since then and no-one knows where the maps are, or if there are any left. The Clerk thought she may have one in the paperwork somewhere and will have a look over the summer. If not there is a comprehensive map available to view at [Definitive Map and Statement | Cambridgeshire County Council](#) and there is also a map on the village notice board.

**Chemical Weed Treatment update:** Following consultation, a decision was taken to reintroduce planned chemical weed treatment twice a year, as a minimum, within built-up areas in villages and towns, inside the 40mph limit or below. The first treatment in Croydon was applied in the week commencing 8th July. There will be a second application in October/November.

**New website:** Council received an offer from the current providers, Sanders and Jay, to create a new website. This was not felt to be necessary. The Clerk has been receiving a lot of junk mail from Russia through the website and has informed Council of this. All communications have to be at least scan read in case there is a genuine email amongst them.

**Any updates** on a community group, vehicle or trust investigating land purchase within the village for community benefit. Nothing to report, and will be raised at the next meeting.

**Discussion** on how the PC could assist a community group, for instance supporting or contributing to a pre-planning application for housing for community benefit. Nothing to report, and will be raised at the next meeting.

**Follow up information:** Gmail address - the final gmail address should be operational by the next meeting.

### **County Councillor Kindersley's verbal report to Council:**

Councillor Kindersley apologised for the lack of a comprehensive report but now the election is out of the way will be sending them monthly as usual.

**CCC Highways:** Please record any Highways problems on the County Council Highways page. Link to the page below:- [Report a highways fault | Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

**CCC Weed Spraying:** This is now being undertaken twice a year. Croydon's first treatment was in week commencing 8th July and the second treatment will be in October/November.

**New town:** There are currently proposals to turn a countryside village into a huge new town, which have been met with anger by local residents. A report by the think-tank, UK DayOne, has recommended that homes for up to 350,000 people should be built in Tempsford in Bedfordshire, five miles south of St Neots. If the town is built, it

would be bigger than Northampton or Milton Keynes and twice the current population of Cambridge, despite the village of Tempsford currently having a population size of just a few hundred. This appears to be in anticipation of East-West Rail's route, the construction of which may yet be scrapped under the new Government. There are alternative lines available for use other than those in East-West's proposal.

**County Council Officers:** A new Fire Officer has already been appointed and interviews for Finance Officer took place on 16th July.

**Mill Lane:** A Councillor mentioned that the unofficial passing places were so deeply potholed that, if you had to pull-over, you could damage your car, so could something be done?

**4 Day Week:** The University of Salford and Cambridge will be discussing the 4 day week. University of Salford researchers have supported landmark research into the benefits of businesses introducing a four-day working week, as from their results it is beneficial and does seem likely to be adopted permanently.

### **Correspondence**

**Electoral Register:** Circulated to Councillors to read. Any amendments will be added to the main Electoral Register.

**The Great Collaboration pilot scheme:** This is seeking to combine Council and Community climate action. The project can be reached more directly via [office@greatcollaboration.uk](mailto:office@greatcollaboration.uk). There is a survey for councils wishing to be involved with the pilot project at <https://1waphsw9lus.typeform.com/to/T63YilpB>

**EVP grant:** SCDC is offering grant funding for purchase and installation of Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCPs), for use by the public. This grant is open to parish councils and community groups, with up to £5,000 available per project, for chargers in car parks associated with community buildings and village halls. The Clerk has replied for Croydon to the questions in the email and was asked to contact the officer involved with further queries.

**CPRE - working with the new Government:** CPRE is ready to work with Keir Starmer and the new Labour government to deliver a thriving and beautiful countryside for everyone. In its manifesto, Labour committed to doing things CPRE has long campaigned for, including protecting the Green Belt, creating a land use framework, and making homes more affordable. CPRE will be working to make sure the issues that affect the countryside are kept firmly on the agenda.

**CCC Community Energy Action Plan:** Cambridgeshire County Council is seeking resident and stakeholder views on how the Council can support communities to benefit from the transition to a clean energy system. Ways in which communities can benefit might include accessing grant funding for domestic energy efficiency or heat pumps, developing a community owned solar or wind installation, reducing energy bills through energy efficiency measures etc. Proposals for how the Council could support communities are set out in a draft Community Energy Action Plan for the county. The draft Action Plan and survey seeking your views on the proposals are here: [Community Energy Action Plan | Consult Cambridgeshire \(engagementhq.com\)](#) by 16th September 2024.

**Way 2 Go Summer 2024:** A comprehensive road safety document aimed mainly at schools and youngsters. If you would like to see the whole document, please contact the Clerk who will email it to you. Further information is available from the website where you can find out more about the service and resources for loan - <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/roadsafety>

### **Circulated to Councillors:**

SCDC Parish weekly agendas/e-bulletin  
CPRE No business case for E-W Rail  
Cambridgeshire Matters  
Rural Housing trip  
Cambridge Approaches E- W Rail - no economic case  
Cams ACRE  
Clerks' e-bulletin  
Summary of Planning Applications  
3C Building Control April - June

### **Any subsequent receipts:**

**New dates for Joint Assembly and Executive Board meetings:** New dates are now confirmed - the Joint Assembly will meet on Thursday 12 September in the Guildhall from 2-6pm and the Executive Board meeting will be on Wednesday 2 October from 10.30am at SCDC Hall in Cambourne. Both meetings will be live streamed on the [GCP's YouTube channel](#) and papers will be published on [Cambridgeshire County Council's website](#).

**Closure of Croydon Hill:** CCC Highways has notified Council that Croydon Hill will be closed for resurfacing of the carriageway and this is currently planned for November for 10 working days; *this may be subject to change*. The closure will be daytime 0800-1800, and a diversion will be in place. An officer from CCC, Emily Spencer, who is part of the Project Delivery team will be managing the scheme. Letters will be delivered to nearby residents, and warning signs will be placed on the highway roughly a month prior to the works. Any queries or if you would like an update on progress should be addressed to Emily Spencer [Emily.Spencer@cambridgeshire.gov.uk]

**Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects:** Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council areas are experiencing an increasing number of NSIP type applications. They are aiming to provide an overview of the projects - and the process, along with updates on each.

Some of the projects are:-

- A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet
- Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (CWWTP)
- East West Rail (EWR)
- Fens Reservoir
- Kingsway Solar Scheme

Links to appropriate pages for more information and advice are also provided. [GCSP NSIP UPDATE JULY 2024.pdf](#)

**Free Tree for School s and Communities:** The Woodland Trust is offering various packs of trees/plants free. The packs include Hedging, Wild Harvest, Year-round Colour and Working Wood. The Clerk has passed the information to the Tree Wardens, to decide if they would like to take advantage of the project.

**Planning:** The application to remove a cedar tree at South House in Croydon High Street has been approved.

**Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS):** The July newsletter has been received and circulated. The newsletter is available to read on [All Together for Healthier Futures \(cloud.microsoft\)](#)

**Cambridge Country Show:** The Cambridge Country Show is coming up on the 10th & 11th August at Stow Cum Quy Park. A poster will be in the notice board and if you would like a copy of it, please contact the Clerk.

## Finance

**Bank statement:** The balance in Council's current account at the end of June was £7,694.39.

**Confirmation of Bank signatories:** A letter dated 14 June has confirmed the mandate change request, so Mr Wheeler is now one of the three signatories who may sign cheques on behalf of the Council.

**Acknowledgement of receipt of Exemption certificate:** An email acknowledgement of receipt of the Exemption Certificate has been removed. A more formal confirmation is usually received later in the year.

## Written Report from S C D Councillor Heather Williams

### Results of the four-day week trial

On Thursday 18 July, full council scrutinised and debated the [results of the four-day week trial](#) at South Cambridgeshire District Council. The results cover the official trial period of January 2023 to March 2024, where desk-based staff worked 30 hours per week for 37 hours' pay. The waste crews trialled a four-day week between September 2023 and March 2024, working 32 hours per week for 37 hours' pay. Despite the trial ending in March, the administration is continuing its part-time hours for full-time pay experiment, as all council employees are now working 32 hours per week for 37 hours' pay.

I voiced my firm opposition to the four-day week in the council meeting, asking questions of the administration including but not limited to:

- How is the data reliable when 37% of council staff reported working more than four days a week in 2024 to prop up the trial?
- Would the administration not agree that nearly 1 in 6 employees undertaking other paid work on their day off significantly undermines the supposed wellbeing benefits of the trial, whilst losing productivity for this council?
- If other councils were to adopt a four-day week this council would lose its competitive advantage - surely removing any benefit of being the first to trial a four-day week and requiring other recruitment innovations?
- 31% of staff reported feeling more stressed, 72% of whom were adversely impacted by that stress. Does the Leader consider those to be acceptable numbers?

- In 18 months there have been 53 process changes, such as automation and an AI webchat, yet the KPIs have remained the same. Given such fundamental streamlining, how is it right to look at unadjusted KPIs and say the data is a fair reflection of the council's four-day week performance?
- How are we monitoring the long-term impacts of increased workload intensity on the bodies of waste operatives?
- When will there be a public consultation and when will all councillors get to vote on this?

I was disappointed by the administration's refusal to respond to all of our questions. I am continuing to voice our concerns and hold the administration to account.

### Planning website update

I am pleased to see our Planning department is creating a new more accessible website for parish councils and residents to use. This aims to be clearer and easier to use to ensure everybody can understand the technicalities of planning.

I understand this has been taken to parish forums and will undergo routine user testing at the council, but I am hopeful the new website will be available for parish councils and residents to make use of soon.

If you have any suggestions which you would like me to take forward, please go get in touch.

### Civil Parking Enforcement update

I am pleased to see that Civil Parking Enforcement appears to be working in South Cambridgeshire. As in the table below, Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) have mostly been recovered – mainly issued to vehicles parked on single or double yellow lines.

Total PCNs issued	Number of PCNs paid to date	Recovery Rate %	Total amount Paid to date	Number of PCNs outstanding	%	PCNs cancelled	Cancellations as a %
555	439	79%	£16,090.00	56	10%	60	11%

It is encouraging that firm action is being taken on uncivil parking. Parking restrictions are there for a reason and protect the safety of pedestrians and road users. I am encouraging everyone to check the signs where you plan to park to prevent being issued with a fine and protect everybody's safety.

### Grants for community groups and parish councils

If you are from a local community group or parish council, I am encouraging you to make the most of the council's available grant schemes. The [GrantGrabber service](#) helps you search for available grants – all in one place. For further information on receiving a grant for a community project from the council, please visit the [grants webpage](#).

Thank you for reading my report. If I can be of any assistance, please do get in touch.

Cllr Heather Williams

SCDC The Mordens Ward

Tel: 07885 774 775

Email: [cllr.williamsh@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.williamsh@scambs.gov.uk)

Twitter: @Cllr\_H\_Williams

Facebook Page: Cllr Heather Williams

Website: [www.cllrheatherwilliams.co.uk](http://www.cllrheatherwilliams.co.uk)

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

**Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 18 September 2024 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm

As there was no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.22pm.

Signed .....

Date .....