

A meeting of Croydon Parish Council meeting was held on Wednesday 11th December 2024 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.

Apologies: Four volunteers

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

Minutes: of the November meeting were agreed and signed.

Declarations of Interest: None

Matters Arising and Village Issues:

Footpaths: Mr Wheeler knows the whereabouts of a larger map and will see if he can obtain an A3 copy of it, to facilitate the clarity for the printing process.

Local Highways Improvement Application: This has to be sent in by 10th January 2025. Arrington is keen to support the reduction of the 40mph from Croydon to Arrington in the interests of road safety. Clerk will need a document from them stating this, for submission with the application for the works.

Website: At the time of writing, the website seems to be up and running. The quote for annual maintenance from Sanders and Jay has been obtained and perused by Councillors. After discussion it was proposed by the Chairman that the quote should be accepted, and all were in Favour. Mr Buchanan will continue to liaise with Sanders and Jay to obtain an invoice for work up to date. Mr Buchanan has already suggested that Council should reimburse the gentleman who has (possibly unknowingly) been funding the domain name for several years and has spoken with him. The gentleman said that there was no need to reimburse him, but Council felt that this was necessary. Mr Buchanan will speak with him again and the final decision on the amount to reimburse will be made in January.

Six Free Trees: Croydon's order for six free trees has been sent, and delivery should be in January next year.

High Street sign: The sign from outside Casa-Mia is missing, and when Mr Sole sends a photo of what is left, Clerk will apply for a replacement sign. There are also two signs down on Lower Road, on either side of Larkins Road, which Mr Buchanan will add to the County Council's website for Highways fault reporting.

Royal British Legion: The local collector amassed a total of £190 - 31, with card payments still to come in. Well done to this gentleman and thank you to the village for supporting this worthy cause.

District Councillor's November 2024 Report for The Mordens Ward SCDC

Not yet received

County Councillor Kindersley's written report to Council:

Gamlingay Division Councillors Report – South Cambridgeshire District Council & Cambridgeshire County Council - November 2024

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!

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 can also follow your councillors on Twitter: @CLlrbridget, @SebKindersley

Happy Christmas: We wish you and yours a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year 2025.

Winter preparations: Preparations for winter are well under way with the county council's fleet of 37 gritters and two quad bikes on stand-by to keep the county's roads, paths and cycleways safe for residents in the colder months. The team's annual preparatory 'dry runs' are now complete. The council's salt barns are fully stocked with 10,000 tonnes of rock salt ready for the start of the cold season, and grit bins across Cambridgeshire have been refilled. The council maintains over 108,000 drains across the county, and has been clearing and repairing these where necessary before winter sets in. Crews will be on standby across the council's four winter service depots at Huntingdon, March, Whittlesford and Witchford, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, between now and

April 2025. Around seventy community volunteers also go out to help grit paths and pavements to keep them safe for those on foot.

NO-HGV ZONE? :Cllr Adam Zerny who represents Potton on Central Beds has asked us to canvass opinion in Gamlingay and surrounding South Cambs villages about a no HGV Zone across the area. Before supporting this (or not) we would like YOUR views. The background to this is a petition last year signed by nearly 1,000 people supporting the restriction of HGVs through Potton and Sandy. Your views - whether you want these changes or not - will be taken into account.

It's important to note that such a zone would not seek to prevent either deliveries for our area or companies who operate from the area conducting their business. It is about preventing HGVs taking shortcuts through the area. It is clear that making such an HGV-free zone work would require joint working between Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire councils. So if you want to stop HGVs taking short cuts through your area, let your councillors know so they can speak on your behalf!

HGVs have no reason to pass through our area unless they are delivering or travelling to/from their workplace. If they are heading down from the north on the A1 and need to go to Cambridge, they can use the A428 via Caxton. If they are heading up the A1 from the south, they should travel to Cambridge via the A505 passing Baldock and Royston.

Such a change would bring a huge benefit to residents who live on King Street Potton and the B1040 through the centre of Gamlingay (Mill Street and Waresley Road) which really feel the increasing pressure of large volumes of HGVs. Of course, this is not criticism of HGV drivers who perform a vital role in today's society. This is about the companies who have not taken the appropriate steps to ensure properly-planned routes that avoid small villages and towns.

Previously CBC Highways has previously flagged concerns about this because - for example - it believes there is a low volume of HGVs going through the area (3% of traffic); there are few collisions attributable to HGVs and enforcement would be difficult. However, it is also true that little evidence has been provided to support these assertions. In any event the issue is the impact of such vehicles, particularly in narrow enclosed streets.

Enforcement would be a matter for the police not local Councils. That said, with other HGV-free zones around the country, residents have discovered that the mere implementation of the zone has made a huge difference once Satnavs in HGVs are updated. PLEASE let us know your views.

Church Street Gamlingay & Croydon Hill: Thank you to all those who have complimented the works on Church St and further afield on Croydon Hill. The works were completed in very quickly with minimal disruption and surprisingly little noise - but a special thanks should go to residents adjacent to the works who did suffer some inconvenience and disturbance.

South Cambs DC Tree Offer: 6 free trees are being offered to parish councils to create habitats and food for wildlife, while also playing a role in the battle against climate change. This scheme is in its fifth year and has seen more than 750 trees planted across South Cambridgeshire. The campaign encourages tree planting by promoting its many benefits and is one of a range of initiatives by South Cambridgeshire District Council to support its ambitions to double nature and get the district to net zero carbon by 2050.

Council Tax Fraud: South Cambridgeshire District Council working with Cambridgeshire County Council has run an initiative to identify individuals incorrectly claiming a Council Tax Single Person Discount. The project has identified more than £800,000 worth of lost income which was due to public services. Incorrect and fraudulent claims for Council Tax discounts or exemptions reduce the overall revenue collected by local councils. This means that there is less money available to fund essential public services. Where there is a debt identified, it is recovered through the normal Council Tax billing process. The District Council is urging people to #DoTheRightThing and report any changes of circumstances which may affect their Council Tax liability. For more information about entitlement please visit the Council's webpage.

Anti Racism Charter; South Cambridgeshire District Council has pledged a commitment to tackling racism - and promoting equality - by signing an anti-racism charter. The charter, an initiative from the trade union UNISON, aims to tackle racism in the public sector and commits organisations to having a clear and visible race equality policy, as well as programme of anti-racism initiatives such as training for all staff. It also includes promoting a diverse workforce, addressing the impact of racism on staff wellbeing, and regularly reviewing strategies to improve racial equality, diversity, and inclusion so the organisation can better reflect the communities it serves.

4 Day Week Trial: The Government has removed the Best Value Notice that was given to South Cambridgeshire District Council for its four-day week working arrangements. The Council received a six-month Best Value Notice from the then Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in November 2023. It was extended for

another six months in May 2024. However, in a recent letter from the recently named Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Government says the Notice will not be reissued.

The letter from MHCLG states “We recognise the Council’s constructive engagement with the department throughout the period of the Notices, including your cooperation with the request for data about the impacts of the four-day working week trial. As the Deputy Prime Minister set out in her letter to local authority leaders on 16 July and reiterated on 24 October at the Local Government Association conference, this Government is committed to working as partners in power, with mutual respect underpinning our approach. This means an end to micromanaging local authorities.” The letter also outlines how MHCLG believes that “local authorities are independent employers who are rightly responsible for the management and organisation of their own workforces.”

South Cambs District Council has published all of the very positive results of the trial and is now considering what else needs to be done before a vote is taken by all council members on whether or not the council formally becomes a 4 day a week employer.

Civil Parking Enforcement: Patrols have been made in Gamlingay in response to requests for civil parking enforcement. A small number of parking contravention notices have been issued. Anyone can make a CPE request: E-mail parkingcontrol@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or online at ‘South Cambridgeshire Civil Parking Enforcement - Cambridgeshire County Council.’

Empty Property: SCDC has agreed a policy on Council Tax Changes for empty properties which will be implemented next year. This is to encourage owners to get empty homes back into use. Homes empty up to two years will pay 100% Council Tax; empty up to five years it results in a 200% levy and up to and over 10 years it will be 300%. One year’s notice will be given of an increase. SCDC currently has about 300 empty properties; 84 of which have been empty for over 10 years. To assist this an Empty Properties team has been set up to resolve long-standing empty properties which can result from probate issues and absentee owners.

White Ribbon Day: Cambridgeshire CC raised the White Ribbon Flag to highlight the ongoing issue of violence against women and girls. Why should this matter? Because two women are killed every week in the UK by a current or former partner. In the last year approximately 25,000 people in Cambridgeshire abused a partner or adult family member, with the majority of perpetrators being men.

Since 2020, four women and three men have been killed by a partner or family member in Cambridgeshire, and eight women and four men took their own lives with domestic abuse being a contributing factor. These are not just numbers - they are our mothers, daughters, sisters, and friends. So as local authorities we continue to raise awareness that we all have a part to play in creating a culture where respect, kindness, and equality at the forefront of our relationships and communities. It starts with conversations – challenging harmful language, calling out inappropriate behaviour, and supporting those who need it most.

Warm Home Plan: The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has launched a [Warm Homes Plan](#) that will help people find ways to save money on energy bills and deliver warmer, cleaner energy to heat homes, with up to 300,000 homes to benefit from upgrades next year. The package will support homeowners to get a £7,500 heat pump grant through the Boiler Upgrade Scheme and households will not need planning permission to install an air source heat pump.

Cambourne to Cambridge busway application submitted: The Greater Cambridge Partnership has now applied for a Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport (DfT) for a new busway, travel hub and path for walkers and cyclists linking Cambourne to Cambridge. The scheme would connect existing and new communities to the west of Cambridge with the city via the new Bourn Airfield development, Hardwick, Coton and the West Cambridge site. The new travel hub at Scotland Farm will be easy to access from the A428 and help car drivers switch to a bus before they hit congestion into the city. The submission follows four rounds of public consultation as well as extensive community and stakeholder engagement on the route since 2015.

Employer’s Audit Scheme: Cambridgeshire has become the first County Council to be awarded ‘Gold’ membership of The 5% Club’s 2024-25 Employer Audit Scheme. This award recognises the Council’s significant contribution to the continued development of all its employees through “earn and learn” schemes such as Apprenticeships and Graduate Development Programmes. With a workforce of around 4,600 people and many roles in areas where there are national skills shortages, such as social care and engineering, the council continues to explore all opportunities to attract and develop a committed and skilled workforce to deliver its vision to build a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING: The Government has published its Local Government finance policy statement 2025 to 2026. There will be no change to the council tax cap, which will remain at three per cent for core council

tax, with a two per cent adult social care precept. The cap for the police precept will be £14, and £5 for fire and rescue authorities. There will be no cap for Combined Authorities, or for town and parish councils. There will be a number of changes to grant funding. And in 2026/27 the Government plans to 'radically simplify the local government funding landscape'.

Local government reorganisation: Proposals to review local government arrangements are coming over the horizon yet again. In particular, all-purpose unitary councils are likely to replace the two tiers of county and district councils; and we are likely to see more directly elected Mayors in parts of the country which currently do not have them. There will be endless debate and consultations, and it is not clear to anyone that local government will necessarily be better as a consequence.

Special educational needs and disabilities funding update: The County Council's Children & Young People Committee received an update last month on the 'safety valve' agreement it made with the Government in 2023. The agreement was made because of the escalating costs of providing for children and young people with high levels of need to meet their special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The agreement included a contribution of £49M from the Government to help repay the council's SEND deficit, with a further £9M to be supplied from the council's reserves. A further £11.3M has been supplied in capital to support new SEND provision in mainstream schools. Two new special schools are to be established in March and Gamlingay delivered directly by the Department of Education - as you know. Plans continue but as we warned before - any project delivered by the DOE will take AGES.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority: CPCA is undertaking a public consultation on spending plans for the next four years closing 23 December and shaping a £309m capital and £320m revenue budget focused on transport, skills, business growth, and resilience. People can participate online, where they can find out more, or via email. Online: <https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/mtfp-budget-consultation>
Email: consultations@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk

Some of the Combined Authority programmes budgeted under each Corporate Strategy priority include

- Improving Connectivity: Funding bus reform, extending the £1 Tiger Bus Pass into 2025/26, £42m for Peterborough Station upgrades, and £4m for an A10 footbridge.
- For Achieving Growth: A ten-year Local Growth Plan, £9.5m for social enterprises, and £20m for a Strategic Innovation Fund.
- Business support through the Growth Hub and skills brokerage and for Resilient Communities:
- Climate Action Plan funding, £14.4m for low-carbon projects and electrification.
- Mayoral Precept: Proposed 4.99% rise for 2025/26, funding 30 new or improved bus services and safeguarding existing routes amid rising costs.

Your Councillors are here to help you. 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: A full register was received, and examine by Councillors.

SCDC Corporate Plan Survey: The response to Council's letter regarding this was received from Cllr Smith. The interesting thing is that, despite all the publicity, there were only 369 responses from the public, hardly a representative number considering the population of South Cambridgeshire. Clerk was asked to write to her along those lines.

Building Control Awareness Sessions: 3C Shared Services Building Control invites you to join online awareness sessions in the New Year on Friday mornings at 9:00am-10:30am between 10th January 2025 – 21st February 2025. Sign up today! Please email 3cbcevents@3csharedservices.org to book your place.

The sessions are led by Registered Building Inspector Fred Hedges at introductory level. Each session includes a presentation with practical examples of application on site and an interactive Q&A session for questions.

- Learn about the Approved Documents
- Learn about what Building Control require for applications
- Good for beginners
- Refresher for all
- Great focus for group discussions and meetings
- Updates on building regulations
- Q & A at the end of each session

- Networking and having a point of contact in Building Control

Councillors felt that, although interesting, they would nearly all be at work during the times of the sessions.

Road Works Events: This was circulated to Councillors but there are no works in the area to do with Croydon. Croydon Hill has just been resurfaced, which has encouraged speeding as the road is so smooth. Unfortunately a lorry (or lorries) have already gone off the side of the road and there is a huge gouge in the verge.

Greater Cambridge Supplementary Planning Document: The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, on behalf of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, are producing three Supplementary Planning Documents. We are inviting comments via public consultation on the following draft documents:

- Draft Greater Cambridge Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document
- Draft Greater Cambridge Health Impact Assessment Supplementary Planning Document
- Draft Cambridge Biomedical Campus Supplementary Planning Document

These Supplementary Planning Documents are intended to provide further information and detailed guidance on policies in the Councils' current Local Plans (2018). The guidance will provide developers and infrastructure providers with clearer expectations for their development proposals coming forward. This aims to streamline the planning process and ultimately lead to higher quality developments across Greater Cambridge.

Public consultation on the three Supplementary Planning Documents is open from 9am on Thursday 28 November and will run until 5pm on Friday 24 January 2025. We encourage all of our communities, stakeholders, statutory consultees, and anyone with an interest to respond.

Please visit www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/supplementary-planning-documents/ to view the documents and find out how to comment. Paper copies of the documents can also be viewed at the Customer Service desks at Mandela House, Cambridge and at South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne. There will also be copies at the Central Library, Cambridge and viewing materials available at our in-person events.

The Councils are holding in-person and online consultation events during the consultation period. These events are an opportunity to connect with Planning Officers, share your thoughts, and find out more about the Supplementary Planning Documents out for consultation.

The **online webinar** about all three of the draft Supplementary Planning Documents will be held on Tuesday 10 December 2024 from 6pm, and it will take place on YouTube. You can join using the link [here](#).

Any subsequent receipts:

The Beeches: Clerk misread the documentation received from Greater Cambridge Planning and the information received related to:-

Croydon Hill Farm: The additional conditions have been fulfilled and the application is determined and closed.

Electric Vehicle Charging Update: Earlier this year SCDC held several engagement sessions with Cambridgeshire Parishes and presented an offer to install Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure in Parish owned and operated car parks. At the time of engagement, it was understood that the offer would be cost neutral for the parish and relatively easy to administer. However following further investigation into the matter it has transpired that there are a number of complexities.

- A legal agreement would be required. Originally it was hoped that a light touch agreement could have been used. However, following further investigation, it has transpired that a much more complicated lease would be needed..
- This will be an administrative burden on the Parish Council's as you may know likely incur legal fee's to review documents.
- The council would not be in a position to refund any costs incurred.

Taking the above into consideration SCDC has decided to withdraw the offer to install EVI in Parish owned or operated car parks as the cost implications and additional work for both parties are disproportionate to the benefits of proceeding with the offer. These areas will still have sufficient access to EVI and SCDC will work to identify suitable sites on the Highway.

East-West Rail: There is a new article on the Cambridge Approaches website which can be accessed on the following link:-

[2024 Non Stat Consultation on EWR – HS2's Badly-Behaved Little Brother whose Parents have learnt no Lessons for his Upbringing.](#)

SLCC - size of Consultation Documentation: " *Many of your councils will have been asked to comment on the Greater Cambridge Planning Supplementary Planning Documents consultation. My council looked at it, but as the*

documents totalled several hundred pages, they were unable to read all of the documents and therefore unable to comment on the consultation. They are concerned that silence is taken for support, and in this case, they cannot say whether they support it or not.

The bus franchise consultation was similar, with my council deciding in the end not to complete it, as it was far too complicated.

They now would like to object to all consultations that do not come in a format they can easily digest and understand.

My council has asked me to find out how other councils manage these consultations. Has your council had an issue with consultations? Do they just ignore ones that are too long to comprehend? Does it bother them that silence is taken as support?"

Croydon discussed this and heartily agreed with the concerns the LCC has. Clerk was asked to respond in this vein.

Remembrance Toolkit: A toolkit has been developed to support Councils organising Remembrance events. A prototype has been developed and circulated for comments, with the final toolkit available next year.

Grant Funding for Net Zero: A grant-funding opportunity is available for community groups, parish councils and businesses in South Cambridgeshire. Applications open today for the [Net Zero Villages grant scheme](#), delivered by South Cambridgeshire District Council with funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. Applications will close **26 January 2025, 11:59PM**.

Grants of between £20,000 and £100,000 are available for projects that help build resilient, low carbon communities. As the grant is aimed at rural communities, areas such as Milton, Histon, Impington, Fulbourn and Teversham are not eligible for funding because they lie in the Cambridge Built Up Area (you can check if your village lies in this BUA [here](#)).

The Net Zero Villages scheme will fund capital projects under the following themes:

- **Energy Efficiency and Generation** – Examples include installing insulation, LED lighting, solar panels, wind turbines, or battery storage for renewable energy.
- **Low Carbon Transport** – Initiatives such as community-run electric shuttle buses or other sustainable transport solutions.
- **Nature-Based Solutions** – Projects like green roofs, walls, or tree planting to cool and enhance community spaces.

To read the full grant guidance and make your application, visit South Cambridgeshire District Council's website – [Net Zero Villages Grant - South Cambs District Council](#). If you plan on making an application, we recommend you attend our application workshop on Wednesday 18 December, 7-8:30pm. You can also book a 20-minute slot with an officer on Friday 20 December 2024 between 9:00am and 4:00pm. Email climateandenvironment@scambs.gov.uk to sign up for the workshop, or to book a slot.

Christmas Bazaar: The Christmas Bazaar was very successful and raised a total of £671 - 38. Thank you to all involved and also those who attended. Council was thanked for funding the Reading Room rental for the event.

Circulated to Councillors:-

SCDC Parish weekly agendas/e-bulletin
November Parish Forum information
CCC Budget Briefing
Cambridge Approaches-letter to Sec of State
ICS Newsletter
Cambs ACRE newsletter
Unlocking the potential of your parish

Finance:

Bank statement: After any cheques that had been presented had cleared, the current account at the end of November was £6553-55.

The Café: The invoice for £72-00 rental for the Café for January to March was presented. Payment for this was agreed and a cheque for £72-00 was signed.

Domain Hosting: The hoster has been in contact with Mr Buchanan, who will discuss with him reimbursement by Council; for action at the next meeting.

Defibrillator: The Clerk has already been given permission to purchase replacement items for the defibrillator

when required. She had already notified Council of the cost of the battery and so a cheque to cover the cost of £354-00 for this was raised and signed, agreement already having been made.

Items for the next agenda: Precept figures

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 15 January 2025 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 8.07pm. Volunteers joined with Councillors for Christmas nibbles and drinks.

Signed

Date

DRAFT