

Minutes of a Full Meeting of FULBOURN PARISH COUNCIL held in The Fulbourn Centre, Home End, Fulbourn on Wednesday, 13th March 2019.

Present: Councillor Drage (Chairman), and Councillors Cone (and District), Dawson, Gaskell, Johnson, Lacey, Smith, Thorn and Ward; County & District Councillor Williams, the Clerk and 3 Parishioners.

	Action
<p>Minutes of a Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 13th March 2019 at 7pm. Present: Councillor Smith (Chairman) and Cllrs Gaskell, Johnson, Lacey, Thorn and Ward. Permission: S/4732/18/FL, 9A Haggis Gap.</p> <p><u>New applications:</u> S/0230/10/FL, Land at Fleam Dyke Pumping Station, Balsham Road – Erection of a glass reinforced kiosk; Recommend supports. S/0551/19/FL, Land south of 1 Town Close – Proposed dwelling; The Parish Council have considered the above application and are unable to see that the situation has changed. The siting of this new application has not changed or improved the situation of the previous application which was rejected. If you look at the proposed boundaries this new proposal allows for greater access and potential development of the land to the south of Town Close. We therefore feel that this application is overdevelopment of a conservation area and will not resolve the poor access which was refused by Highways previously. Recommends objects. S/0617/19/AD, Tesco Superstore, Yarrow Road – Advertisement signage to petrol filling station facility and new main gantry sign. Recommend supports.</p> <p>The Chairman began the meeting by introducing James Fisher, SCDC S106 Officer following a meeting at SCDC on Tuesday, 12th March 2019 to discuss the Ida Darwin development S106 Agreement which is still in Draft. When asked, Mr Fisher said The Steiner School had expressed an interest in the Early Years but he had explained to them from the structure of the S106 it was up to the Parish Council to either build a community and Early Years facilities or for the PC to decide its role when these have been built. Mr Fisher said this could be 2 years before this is settled. Cllr Cone also asked about the Early Years and James Fisher said negotiations are on-going with the CCC. He said if the PC takes ownership of the joint building the CCC would be given a long lease, they would appoint providers to run the Early Years and the CCC would also pay maintenance to the PC for landscaping of that site, car parking and any repairs. If the PC decides not to take on the building then the responsibility will fall to the CCC who work to space standards when delivering any education facilities and know what has to be provided. Cllr Cone then asked about allotments and wondered if these could be provided on the Green Wedge area. Cllr Drage said these had been considered during the previous application in 2014 but unfortunately were dismissed due to poor soil conditions, location of trees, water supply and vehicle access. Mr Fisher said the PC could ask the developers to provide allotments but they would not be obliged to provide any. James had also provided the PC with a flowchart of the Green Wedge area should the PC either accept or decline to take this over, but again this decision will not need to be made in the near future.</p> <p>131 To accept apologies for absence. Cllrs Brown, Hinton, Lockwood and Newell.</p> <p>132 To notify the clerk of any declarations of interest that will be declared by members for any item to be discussed.</p> <p><u>Public & Press</u> - You are invited to attend the whole meeting and are welcome to speak at our Open Forum at the beginning of the meeting. No questions from the floor.</p>	

133 SCDC Planning Officers

Julie Eyre, SCDC Planning Officer and James Fisher, S106 Officer answered questions from Members. Cllr Gaskell said she felt the PC did not have the same relationship it once had with the SCDC Planning Department feeling the PC did not get proper feedback or co-operation. Cllr Gaskell said Council knows the village and its problems including with traffic so was surprised that the Pierce Lane/High Street application was passed by SCDC despite the numerous objections.

Julie Eyre said every application was decided on its own merits but agreed the PC should be kept informed. The Chair and Vice-Chair of SCDC Planning decide whether an application should go before the Planning Committee.

When questioned about the Six Bells application and again parking issues and numerous objections, Ms Eyre said CCC are consulted and if their Highways Department do not object, then under planning criteria, the application cannot be refused. She continued, even if the PC doesn't request that an application goes before the Planning Committee, the Chair and Vice-Chair at SCDC can still request this. The current Scheme of Delegation is under review and the PC can make any comments to the Head of Service. Ms Eyre said as there is now a 5 year Plan and Local Plan in place, more applications from developers can be resisted. It was reiterated that communication needs to improve, and Julie confirmed she would take back our comments to SCDC.

Cllr Thorn asked why applications are no longer advertised in the Cambridge News. It was pointed out they are now in the Cambridge Independent probably due to costs.

Cllr Dawson couldn't believe a Scandinavian design of a metal clad building (the Pierce Lane development) which is also in a Conservation Area, had been approved. Ms Eyre answered that the application would have gone through the planning process and that a Heritage Impact Statement would have been considered.

Cllr Smith asked about retrospective applications. Julie Eyre said these were not an offence unless applicable to a Listed Building, and are looked at in the same way as all other planning applications. Non-material and Variation of Conditions applications can also be submitted, but if the building is moved, then a new application must be submitted. Julie said if the PC really objects to a particular application, then by all means ask the Case Officer to make a site visit. Applications have to be determined within 8 weeks. SCDC work within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Chairman thanked both Julie Eyre and James Fisher for attending tonight's meeting.

134 To receive reports from County and District Councillors.

134.1 County Councillor Williams issued the attached report.

134.2 District Councillor Williams and District Councillor Daunton issued the attached report. Cllr Williams told Members Cllr Daunton had been involved in a road accident on her way to the meeting, and although not hurt, was shaken up, hence her absence. Members wished Cllr Daunton well.

134.3 District Councillor Cone issued the attached report which he briefly went through. All reports were accepted.

135 Swifts Estate – Adoption of Open Spaces for discussion.

Cllr Thorn explained a site meeting with a representative from a company appointed by Accent Group and some Councillors had taken place and they visited the main green area and play area. Council had requested a map prior to the visit, and the gentleman had been unclear what exactly was been proposed for adoption. A map was then received after this meeting covering the whole estate, which with the landscaping, trees and open spaces would be very expensive for the Parish Council to consider adopting. The clauses in the S106 Agreement would need to be checked carefully. Council agreed another site meeting is necessary along with a definitive map and proper clarification is required from Accent Group. When asked, Cllr Williams confirmed the County Council has not yet adopted the roads. Cllr Johnson has done a survey of the street lights which are still not working and has arranged a site meeting later in March. Until these issues are resolved, the Parish Council will not consider adopting the Open Spaces in the near future.

<p>136 To approve the minutes of the last meeting. The Minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.</p>	<p>1374</p>
<p>137 Matters arising from the last meeting. 137.1 Youth Building. Concerns have been raised that the fire damaged old Institute building has not yet been demolished and removed. When building work is completed and the heras fencing is removed from the site, it will leave the area very vulnerable. The PC will write to FISSC for an update. 137.2 Website. Cllrs Cone and Thorn will meet to discuss updating/changing our current site. A survey of other parishes' websites has been conducted for comparison. 137.3 Balsham Road Exception Site. Now fencing has been removed, debris has been strewn around from the site and a lot of cardboard has collected in the ditches. The Clerk has reported this to Accent Group. 137.4 Stonebridge Lane. Fencing repairs have been carried out and Holly bushes strategically planted. Top soil will be ordered for the verge with grass and wild flower seeds planted in the Spring. 137.5 Fulbourn Walkers. Instigated by Cllr Ward, 20+ people turned up for the first meeting on 1/3/19. This Friday weekly event is proving very popular. 137.6 Defibrillator. Cllr Smith will be installing this equipment in The High Street near the funeral parlour and will arrange for the sign currently outside the Co-operative Store to also be relocated; thanks to Ms Eve Clarke for agreeing to the new site. 137.7 Steiner School. Cllr Gaskell took up their invitation to visit the school and found this very interesting. 137.8 Tree Survey. The Chairman suggested compiling a list of all PC maintained village trees and reviewing the survey completed in The Haven a few years ago.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>DT&GC</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>DS</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>138 Tree works: None received this month.</p>	
<p>139 Correspondence. 139.1 CCC – Flood Risk and Biodiversity newsletter. 139.2 SCDC – Parish Planning Training dates for Members to attend during February and March 2019. 139.3 IHMC (Integrated Highways Management Centre) – January 2019 incident report. 139.4 War Memorials Trust – February 2019 magazine. 139.5 E Fletcher – Seeking support from the Parish Council with regard to setting up a 1,000 acre wood on County Council land in the parish. This would protect the Green Belt whilst enhancing the area with various walks enabling the project to link up with nearby local amenities. Ms Fletcher has also spoken to representatives from the Neighbourhood Plan. Invited to attend April 2019 meeting. 139.6 SCDC – Tree Warden Event being held on Tree Pruning in Haslingfield on 4/3/19. 139.7 Fulbourn Forum – Notification of activity taking place in Teversham Road to the rear of Poor Well. Plus list of planned to take place during Spring 2019. 139.8 CCVS (Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service) – February 2019 update and March 2019 newsletter received. 139.9 Clerks & Councils Direct – March 2019 magazine. 139.10 A14C2H (A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon) – Latest news release with the completion of the 750m River Great Ouse viaduct. 139.11 CCC – Consultation on the proposed revision of the Local Validation Guidance and Check Lists for planning applications for the County Council's own development and for waste development which runs until 11/04/2019. 139.12 Greater Cambridge Partnership – The launch of a public engagement campaign about future travel in Greater Cambridge called "Choices for Better Journeys". 139.13 S&L Davies – Request to hide a geocache container in Huntsmill. They live in the road so can monitor its placement. For more information on this hobby please see https://www.geocaching.com/guide/ This hobby is already happening around the village and Council agreed to this request.</p>	<p>April agenda</p> <p>Clerk</p>

139.14 **P&E Mellis** – Query regarding noise levels when live music is played outside. The Clerk has acknowledged and forwarded email to all District Councillors for advice. Both Cllrs Cone and Daunton have contacted Mr & Mrs Mellis to resolve this situation.

139.15 **R Culshaw** – Wanted it put on record what excellent contractors the Parish Council has in maintaining Poor Well. He also has a contact at Cambridge Water Company to keep the Horse Pond looking neat and tidy.

139.16 **SCDC** – The Waterbeach New Town Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted by South Cambridgeshire District Council on 6/2/19. To view the adopted SPD please visit www.scambs.gov.uk/waterbeachSPD

139.17 **SCDC** – The Great Abington Former Land Settlement Association (LSA) Estate Neighbourhood Plan was made (adopted) by South Cambridgeshire District Council on 21/2/19. This is the first Neighbourhood Plan in South Cambs to be made (adopted) and now forms part of the development plan for South Cambridgeshire. All accompanying documents can be viewed at www.scambs.gov.uk/greatabingtonformerlsaestatentp

139.18 **SCDC** – Tree Guardian, March 2019 South Cambs Tree Warden Network update.

139.19 **Greater Cambridge Shared Planning** – March 2019 Planning Policy update.

139.20 **SCDC** – Parish Planning Forum meeting 14/3/19 at Cambourne.

139.21 **CCC, Street Works** – Temporary Road closure at Gazelle Way, Teversham and Yarrow Road, Fulbourn from 20.00hrs to 06.00hrs daily between 8th April and 16th April 2019. To be displayed on notice boards.

139.22 **Resident** – Persistent blocking of Public Footpath at Balsham Road to Roman Road. To discuss with CCC, Highways Officer at arranged meeting visiting various issues around the village.

139.23 **G Dunsmore** – Concerned about lack of maintenance at the Play Area on The Swifts Estate and need for more equipment for younger children. She has been advised by Accent that this is up to the Parish Council. The Clerk has replied that the PC hasn't yet taken ownership of this area and Accent Group is responsible for current repairs.

139.24 **Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council** – Details of their response to the East West Rail's Route Option Consultation can be found at: http://www.bassingbourn.org/files/8315/5198/6090/EWR_consultation_response_Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth_PC.pdf

139.25 **Neighbourhood Plan, Conservation and Environment.** Five action points were raised after referring back to the Action Plans arising from the 2009 Parish Plan: -

1. To form a Fulbourn Society – a role taken on by Fulbourn Forum;
2. Ensure the village is free from litter – two litter picks per year run by the Forum with help from the PC.
3. Provision of allotments. The PC responded that it had been unsuccessful in securing additional land; had hoped to secure 25 plots when the first Ida Darwin re-development application had been submitted in 2014; had met agents from the Moss Trust regarding the field at the entrance to the recreation ground but could not afford their then asking price of £500K and even the suggestion that householders might let garden space. This raised concerns if the resident moved or sadly died.
4. Keep residents informed of all environmental matters and
5. Tackle Highway concerns including the condition and provision of pavements, signing of footpaths and overflowing drainage systems. The Forum along with the History Society and Library had produced a Fulbourn Walks book, which although now out of print, is available online. Council Sub Committees will take these action points on board.

Clerk

JG

140 To resolve the accounts for the month.

Townley: Toilets Donation.....257.70	HP: Monthly Ink supplies.....3.49
Dent Security: MUGA maintenance....123.60	Konica: Photocopies.....10.33R
M Morris: Pavilion repairs.....40.00R	C Lawrence: Tennis court 10%....2,640.00R
B's Travel: Shopper bus.....220.00R	T Fretwell: R.F.O. fees.....500.00R
Barclays: Monthly fees.....18.63R	Daisy: Mobile Phone.....15.00
CJ Murfitt Ltd: New building.....114,194.30	Townley Trust: Hall hire.....82.50
Ridgeons: Fencing supplies.....418.29	Shelford Heating: Repairs.....209.40

<p>e-on: Pavilion electricity.....336.50 D Sexton: N Plan expenses.....202.72 Cllr Thorn proposed accepting the accounts, seconded by Cllr Johnson and agreed by Council. Quotation: G Marshall to re-paint Men’s changing room following condensation damage and re-fix damaged guttering plus the supply of new gutter brackets - £225.00</p>	<p>Algar: New sign.....86.40 Timpsons: New keys.....12.00</p>	<p>1376</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>141 Council Committees. 141.1 Neighbourhood Plan. Notes from a meeting held on 6/3/19 were issued and accepted. 141.2 Swift’s User Group. Minutes of a meeting held on 27/2/19 were issued and accepted.</p>		
<p>142 To receive items for inclusion on the next Agenda for decision and/or action. Emma Fletcher, proposed Beacon Forest. See Item 139.5.</p>		
<p>There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.25pm.</p>		

Attached reports:

Item 134.1

County Councillor Report to Fulbourn Parish Council

1. The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) is inviting views from commuters, residents and businesses about how to cut congestion and transform public transport to give people a real alternative to using a car – helping to reduce air pollution as well as maintaining sustainable economic growth. In 2017, the GCP spoke to more than 10,000 people in ‘Our Big Conversation’ about their thoughts for improving travel in the Greater Cambridge area and beyond. A clear majority said that public transport needs to be improved and congestion needs to be reduced. The GCP has launched ‘Choices for Better Journeys’ which asks residents, commuters and businesses about a range of issues, including: Proposals to transform public transport in our region to offer a better alternative to the car; views on different ideas for tackling congestion, improving air quality and freeing-up road space for quicker public transport – including parking levies, road charging, and limiting access; and funding for a future improved public transport system. Have your say by visiting www.greatercambridge.org.uk/choicesforbetterjourneys before midnight on 31 March 2019.

2. Acting for the Combined Authority now that the Mayor is responsible for funding public transport the contract for the number 18 bus to Newmarket has been retendered with the same level of service as presently operated.

3. Work to repair Elizabeth Way Bridge in Cambridge, over the River Cam, will begin on Friday 8 March for four weekends. The scheme will replace damaged bridge expansion joints, which absorb movements of the bridge caused by changes in temperature. This will be done one side at a time, starting on the southbound side into the City Centre. One lane will remain open to traffic in each direction. It is proposed to carry out the work over four weekends – 8 to 11 March, 15 to 18 March, 22 to 25 March and 29 March to 1 April. It will start at 8pm on Friday until 5am on the Monday to try and minimise disruption.

4. Cambridgeshire County Council is pleased to announce new funding rounds for the Innovate & Cultivate Fund. The aim of the fund is to support initiatives that strengthen our communities and reduce pressure on County Council services, thereby giving a return on investment. Council services that are inviting applications include adult social care and children & families services. The Innovate & Cultivate Fund has two streams: a 'Cultivate' fund for smaller projects that build community support networks and an 'Innovate' fund for bigger, bolder and more innovative initiatives. We've made big changes to the Cultivate fund! We've increased the maximum Cultivate grant from £10k to £19k and we've developed new guidance on starting Cultivate 'Seed' Fund Projects that can help people to remain independent and active within their community, encourage volunteering and complement more costly Council services. Projects include Timebanks, Good Neighbour Schemes, Dementia-Friendly Communities and Men's Sheds. The fund is open to voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations based in and outside of Cambridgeshire, and public sector organisations in Cambridgeshire.

Application deadlines are:

1 May - Cultivate grants (£2,000 - £19,000)

1 August – Innovate grants (£19,001 - £50,000)

Applications and further information about fund priorities and criteria may be found on the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation website.

5. Cambridgeshire County Council's Children's Services has recently been assessed by Ofsted. Sadly, Ofsted have downgraded the council's children's services from 'good' (in 2014), to 'requires improvement' less than five years later. This is not a 'vote of confidence' in the quality of Children's Services in Cambridgeshire (as described by the County's own press release) but a clear sign that the quality of children's services has moved in the wrong direction in recent years. Social care services are under huge pressure and the Ofsted report makes clear social worker caseloads are far too high. Quotes from the Ofsted report that did not make it into the County Council press release:

"The quality and the timeliness of services remain less than good for too many children. For these children, the local authority is not making the positive difference it could and should."

"The most significant challenge to the local authority's ability to provide consistently good services to children, young people and their families has been, and continues to be, the size of caseloads. These are too high for most social workers and unsustainable in some teams. The impact of this is that, too often, social workers and frontline managers have had to focus on the most urgent and important work to secure children's immediate safety, without sufficient capacity for the follow-up work needed to sustain change within families or to ensure that children in care have permanent homes as soon as possible."

"The help and protection that children, young people and their families receive in Cambridgeshire requires improvement. A significant minority of children do not get the help and support they need quickly enough. Too many assessments take longer than they should and do not fully explore underlying problems or the wishes and feelings of children. Significant workload pressures in teams across the county mean that there is much variability in who gets what help and support as well as in its effectiveness."

John Williams
11 March 2019

Item 134.2

Report to Fulbourn Parish Council from District Councillors

John Williams and Claire Daunton for March 2019

This report provides factual information relating to the District and the Parish. We hope councillors will find it interesting and useful. Our contact details: John.Williams@cambridgeshire.gov.uk; Cllr.Daunton@scambs.gov.uk

1. South Cambs Budget and Business Plan

South Cambridgeshire District Council is embarking upon its first ever Liberal Democrat Business Plan and has adopted a five-year budget to deliver it, increasing expenditure on general services to £20 million by 2023/24. The Council is changing course to bring more opportunities for income generation and partnerships, delivering a bigger programme than that proposed by the previous administration. It also delivers a new organization that is more responsive and productive to tackle the known and unknown challenges we will face over the coming five years and beyond. We will increase the General Fund reserve to be prepared for the Government's Fair Funding Review and BREXIT in 2020. We have avoided the need to borrow to lend to Ermine Street (the Council's trading company that lets homes in the private market) and the Ice Rink thereby increasing income from these loans.

As the Council grows and transforms over the coming five years, we will see more of our income coming from commercialization to offset the loss of Government funding and the expected diversion of some Business Rates away from District Councils. This will give us a more diverse investment portfolio of up to £100 million. So, for the coming year in return for ten pence a week increase in South Cambridgeshire's Council Tax for households in an average D band property we will:

Have more resources to handle Universal Credit claims.

Introduce more online choices to make the Council more responsive.

Increase resources to tackle recycling.

Spend more to build more homes that are affordable.

Spend more on green initiatives to achieve our zero carbon goal.

Support wellbeing and healthy living which includes the mobile warden scheme.

Provide capital funds to diversify our income and have an investment strategy.

Bring our staff pay up to competitive levels.

Introduce a new system to handle planning applications.

The adoption of an investment strategy will ensure that in future all our investments are aligned with the Council's Business Plan, deliver value for money and that there is robust governance in place to ensure transparency and best practice. We will be introducing a new management structure to bring the Council in line with best practice in local government but this will be cost neutral and not adversely affect front lines services which will benefit from a more responsive organisation. South Cambs is departing upon an exciting journey to deliver to its dynamic communities a dynamic plan to put the heart back into our District.

2. Business Plan: Additional Points

Villages: Business and Skills

The Business Plan informs the subsequent agreement of annual service plans. The Plan covers many areas and makes a large number of recommendations. Several of these are specific to village circumstances. We set some of them out here:

Business: the aim is to work with partners to promote local businesses and local supply chains; and to make sure that broadband speeds and mobile phone access are excellent.

Skills: the aim is to work with partners to identify the skills needed by local employers in specific areas of the District

Local: the aim is to work with parish councils and village-based businesses to support local economies, including with smaller parishes

Premises: the aim is to work with local businesses and parishes to help provide business premises for local enterprises.

Meetings with villages. There will be two meetings/workshops set up to discuss ideas and possibilities concerning local economies with villages and parish councils.

Housing

There is much in the business plan on housing; and it is worth reading these sections. Here we pick out one aspect relevant to villages specifically:

the District is aiming to work *with at least ten parishes a year* to bring forward affordable housing; to enable – with local support – the delivery of homes on the edges of villages, where planning permission would not ordinarily be given for market housing (areas known as rural exception sites). We are also aiming to provide *support to communities of all sizes* to adopt Neighbourhood Plans to help shape the future development of their villages.

Being Green to our Core

We will provide support and guidance to community groups for projects that will reduce reliance on fossil fuels and promote behaviour change to help achieve the zero-carbon target. We will re-energise the Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership and investigate opportunities for helping local groups to secure grant-funding and kick-start projects. We will install air-quality monitors in hotspots across the District.

3. Brexit: Work of the SCDC Advisory Group

This cross-party group was established last year, under the chairmanship of our colleague Councillor Geoff Harvey (Balsham Ward), to review and report back on the potential impact of Brexit on firms in South Cambridgeshire. It was tasked with recommending steps that could be made to minimise those impacts where possible. The group has met four times since being established – in September, October, November and December 2018. Members of Cambridge City Council were also part of the group. The group's report to Cabinet on 6th March was commended.

Following the report, it has now been agreed to focus on five key areas. These will now be developed into more detailed actions:

- Improving the flow of information and advice to business – including developing an online resource that draws together practical information for local companies
- Establish Greater Cambridge internationally as a great place to work and do business – including working with partners to promote the area as one that welcomes diversity and new migrants to spread a positive message
- Ensuring that the importance of Greater Cambridge to the national economy is recognised and that its funding needs are addressed – including by working with the Combined Authority and Government to understand and influence plans for new funding arrangements post-Brexit
- Supporting agricultural businesses – including ensuring the Council understands the challenges facing the farming community and can offer support
- Continue to manage Brexit impact upon Council – including contingency planning where appropriate to mitigate risks

Detailed actions will now be drawn up, covering the above topics, and implemented as required, taking account of whatever transpires at the national level.

4. Recycling and Waste Management: Fly-tipping and Street Sweeping

SCDC already has a very good reputation for recycling and waste management (it is 6th in the country for the amount of waste recycled, about 60%), but it would like to be at the top of the table and is actively looking to improve this further. It will do this not only by investing in new machinery, but also by working smarter with existing staff and equipment. In respect of fly tipping – which was an issue highlighted by residents in the Business Plan consultation – this means providing more signposting for members of the public in recognising and reporting fly-tipping. It also involves training staff in waste management and enforcement to work more closely together to improve reporting and timely action. A new work plan is already being put into practice. In addition to action on fly-tipping, SCDC is reviewing road sweeping to make smarter use of existing capacity, making sure that sweeping is done where and when needed, a move away from ‘a one-size fits all’ approach.

5. Mobile Warden Scheme

At a meeting of the District’s Grants Committee (of which both Cllrs Williams and Daunton are members) on Friday 22nd February, it was agreed to make awards to all Mobile Warden schemes applying. There was also the opportunity to add in a small extra sum. In total a sum of £23,000 was made available. It was further agreed to give consideration at a future meeting to increasing funds available in the following financial year; and to seek to widen the geographical reach of the schemes. Contrary to reported comments, no cut in funding is proposed for these schemes at present, nor any cuts proposed – quite the opposite.

6. Council Tax: Empty Homes Premium

The Council has approved the charging of an increased premium on council tax for empty homes. This has been done in order to encourage the bringing back of empty homes into use. There are a number of homes across the District that have been empty for some years, at a time when the needs for homes is growing exponentially. The change in tax will take account of individual cases where there might be extenuating circumstances in families, probate delays and other causes. *Some figures:* Homes empty in the District: for 2-5 years,100; 5-10 years, 41; more than 10 years, 39. As a result of the decision, from 1 April 2019 there will be an additional 100% council tax premium on homes empty for 2 or more years;200% on those empty for five years or more; 300% , those empty ten years or more

7. Planning

The Statement of Community Involvement in Planning is now out for consultation. It takes account of new planning legislation and of the integration of the planning service across District and City. The document sets out clearly and explains the four key stages for planning. More training on planning issues for parish councils is to be offered for better understanding of the regulatory framework that planning officers must work within, and the opinions of statutory bodies they must take account of. We have arranged for a visit of a planning officer to the parish council to discuss both general and specific planning issues.

Disability Confident

SCDC is now a member of the national Disability Confident scheme for employers. We will be known as an employer of choice for those with disabilities, broadly defined, and we will be active in encouraging the disabled, within a broad range of disabilities, to put themselves forward as candidates for post in the Council.

8. Community Resilience

A workshop for parish councils on the theme of community resilience was held on Saturday 9th March, organised by the Communities Team at South Cambs and the multi-agency Crime and Disorder Partnership of which Councillor Daunton and Councillor Bradnam (Waterbeach and Milton Ward) are members. Members of the Fire Brigade, Police, Safeguarding, Domestic Violence and other teams, from District and County, took part. Issues covered included: scams, community connectedness, anti-social behaviour, speeding. There were some good examples of the obvious – connected communities are less likely to suffer crime than those less connected – but these were worth stating – *community safety groups, parish safety surveys, groups of individuals who check up on neighbours for loneliness but also for security and safety.* We learnt about efforts to deal with the increasing number and sophistication of scams; the problems of hoarding, of overgrown properties making for fire risks. We also learnt about the changing tactics of drug gangs and of those who deal in people-trafficking, modern-day slavery, persistent domestic abuse. These happen

in our communities – areas we know – but are often hidden and we need to ask questions. There are resources available to help villages and parish councils be more resilient – both in terms of funding and of advice. On such example is the County's Innovate and Cultivate Fund. We would be happy to pass on email and web details so please ask us, by emailing us at the addresses above.

Item 134.3

District Councillor report to Parish Council March 2019

Increase in Council Tax on empty homes

The South Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet has recommended an increase in Council Tax on properties that are left empty. There is currently a 50% Council Tax surcharge on properties that are left empty, which will be replaced by:

- From 1 April 2019, double tax on homes that are empty for two years or more
- From 1 April 2020, triple tax on homes that are empty for five years or more
- From 1 April 2021, quadruple tax on homes that are empty for ten years or more

So, after 10 years a Band D property would attract £6,982 Council Tax a year, or £13,964 for Band H, using the 2018-19 rates.

The plan is to discourage property owners from not renting out properties that could be occupied. There are currently around 180 properties in the District that have been empty for two years or more - a low number by national standards.

Many of our housing problems are caused by 'land banking', where developers get planning permission and then wait many years before building the houses. Householders who apply for planning permission must start building within three years or lose their permission, but developers are allowed to delay indefinitely. Fixing that problem would have a much greater impact on our limited supply of housing than increasing these penalties much further.

These charges do not apply to second homes, and there are exemptions and discounts for many situations, such as during probate (after the death of the owner), or if the owner is in a nursing home or hospital, or away caring for someone. These are set out in more detail in a document called Understanding Your Council Tax Bill, sent with each tax bill and available at:

<https://tinyurl.com/SCambsTaxDesc>

Despite this policy change only having an impact on up to 180 properties across the whole of SCDC (a population of around 156,000 people), I believe this area to be unique in terms of the very high demand for housing. As I have said in previous reports, Cambridge and the surrounding area (SCDC) has perhaps been a victim of its own success. We have a large number of skilled jobs which is brilliant for economic output, investment, wages etc but has the effect of driving up houses prices and putting pressure on existing infrastructure. I do not ordinarily like putting taxation on to businesses but I believe any impact on getting more homes into circulation is so important in this area that I voted in favour of this policy. I believe the impact will be limited but every little helps when you have healthcare professionals such as my colleagues at Addenbrookes who struggle to live anywhere near Cambridge; I never oppose for the sake of opposing.

SCDC Chief Executive takes early retirement costing the tax payer £202 500

At an extraordinary meeting held on Thursday 21st February (closed to press and public), Liberal Democrats agreed Mrs Agass leaving the Council with early access to her local government pension. In order for this to happen the Council will contribute £202 500 into the local government pension scheme towards the cost of early retirement. I want to make it clear that in this closed meeting I voted against this decision and it is my opinion that this is a huge amount of council tax

payer's money being spent for a member of staff to retire early. Be assured that Conservative group raised the grave concerns that We had about this large sum of money in the meeting.
SCDC budget 2019

On the 21st of February the full Council presided over this year's budget. As a member of the Conservative opposition group I have tried to look carefully at the financial package being put forward by the administration so I can take a view on whether I broadly support or oppose the strategy being put forward. Not being an economist or an accountant, I have not found this the easiest task so have sought advice from officers and fellow councillors to get as much information as possible. The main areas that I wanted to base my decision on were any obvious black holes; are finances being directed in the right areas? Where could money be better spent? Is the budget realistic? And does it maintain the principles of Ermine Street Housing?

I myself and fellow Conservative Councillors after some deliberation decided to vote against this budget. This does not mean that we disagreed with everything within the budget but it does mean that we had concern enough that we felt unable to support it. I had a number of concerns along with the rest of my group which will be documented in the minutes of the budget meeting on the SCDC website. Some of my concerns I have indicated below:

- The investment strategy I worry is too high risk with the budget relying on large amounts of money to come in from future investment. If the Council does not achieve the optimistic income / returns on investments then there will be a large hole in the budget.
- £1 million is being handed over to four Councillors with little to no scrutiny and overview as to how it is invested.
- £1 million is being drawn from reserves to go into restructuring the Council on top of the £50,000 already being spent on management consultants who were hired to advise the new leadership how to run the Council.
- instead of spending money on policy advisors to prop up the cabinet, the Conservative group felt this money would be better spent on prevention of fly tipping and improving street sweeping services.

An area where I do agree with the administration is that we should always be looking for new investment opportunities that will deliver returns that can be directed into frontline services. Ermine Street Housing is the perfect example of this. Given that the administration has seemingly had a change of heart on gaining revenue via commercial means, I asked the following question during the budget debate:

The administration states it wants to achieve 25% of money spent on services to be from investments. The investment strategy currently being pursued through Ermine Street Housing is returning around £2 million a year and as the leadership know, I worry about any interference that could jeopardise income from the company that will ultimately be spent on frontline services. Can we have confidence in the many future investment decisions that this administration will have to make given their past negativity around Ermine Street Housing?

The Council tax will be going up by £5 for the average band D home. I agree with this approach and as it was exactly what the previous administration were raising the Council Tax by each year.

Thank you for taking the time to read my report; if you have any questions or want to discuss any of the issues raised email me on graham.cone@councillor.online or ring 07595361285 (please leave a voice mail if I am unavailable)

Councillor Graham Cone

Item 141.1

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6TH MARCH 2019

1 Present: Ron Ward, Richard Townley, David Cottee, Richard Bennett, Mike Humphrey-Davis, Dave Sexton, David Nobel, John Morgan, Tim Vaughan-Lane, John Morgan, Clare Daunton, Graham Cone, Jane Gaskell, Suzy Worzencroft.

2 Apologies: Roger Fletcher, Alan Treadgold.

3 The notes of the meeting held on 7th January were accepted.

4 Matters Arising –

Next Local Plan. Work is about to start with probably “call for sites”

Nothing significant to report although the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership are talking about a “Spatial Plan”, which, at this time having no legal status may eventually be of greater significance.

We now have a Facebook page - thanks to JM for arranging.

Maps. We now have map from SCDC and further one obtained by TVL. TVL can easily obtain further copies of his while Alison Talkington would be approached for further copies or authority to reproduce that from SCDC - RT

Ida Darwin 106. Indications are that provision of Community Building is a fait accompli.

Grant. £1000 grant is now in Parish Council bank. Please channel any cash requirements through RW.

5 Leaflet. Thanks to Editorial Group. The draft was accepted including the updated Vision. DN would arrange printing/circulation with PC. Extra would be printed to be made available through Surgery, Library etc. Please advise RW of cost when available.

Revised Vision would be posted on the Website- JM

Agreed to work towards issuing a further leaflet with the July Pump which would give the opportunity to raise any specific questions

Groups might have. RW will identify last date for compiling.

6 Social Issues Group. The Primary school, Steiner and Landmark had been visited, updated on the Plan and asked for their input over the next few weeks.

The Primary school has had its annual intake raised from 45 to 60. It had been indicated that they may now be an overflow school for nearby villages namely Teversham and the Wilbraham's. This was queried by our District Councillors but if it were to happen may have implications re traffic into and out of the village.

The Fulbourn Arts were asked to consider if they had any input into our process.

7 Economics Group. Some 190 questionnaires had been delivered to businesses and some 35 returned. Results are being summarized.

The Agents for Capital Park were very interested in our process and were going to co-ordinate responses from their tenants.

The NHS site would be visited shortly.

8 Environment Group. Awaiting a response from the PC regarding need for allotments although it was noted that a waiting list may in itself not reflect actual need.

It was noted that the village does not meet recommended Recreation Ground space and the possibility of linking both needs together was noted.

An initial list of Assets of Community Value had been drawn up.

RW would send this to PC to establish how this was to be processed including registering registering with SCDC.

We had been approached re a project called Beacon Forest which if actioned could involve the fringe of the village. Presentations were being made to affected Parish Councils. They would also attend an Environment Group meeting.

9 The proposals from the two consulting firms had been circulated. After discussion it was agreed to contact Urban Silence and develop a more detailed proposal with them.

The initial support needed was thought to be:-

- reviewing our progress to date to ensure nothing has been missed.

- seek support on rules and regulations we need to follow.

- review our timeline.

- each group was asked for their key issues and everything related to roads, cars, transport etc. was identified. Environment was considered a key issue.

- likely format of the Plan with particular focus on all the criteria to meet including SCDC need and links to Local Plan.

There may well be other areas which the consultants could identify.

A sub group of RW, RT and M.H-D would seek to meet with Urban Silence over the next two weeks to move things forward.

10 Gt. Abington's Neighbourhood Plan had been completed and adopted SCDC. Claire would advise RW of their contact details to arrange a discussion to see what lessons we could learn.

11 The VDS continues to progress. A further review was scheduled for Friday 8th March.

It was hoped that ours would be presented to SCDC cabinet in early April. There would then a period of consultation including an exhibition at the Swifts room on 25th April. It was to be hoped that it would become a "Supplementary Planning Document" by July.

12 Future Funding. RW would seek further grant for financial year 19/20.

13 Date of next meeting – Wednesday 24th April starting at 7pm.

Item 141.2

MINUTES OF THE SWIFTS USER GROUP MEETING HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 27 February 2019

Present: Derek Thorn (Chair) James Caesar, Trish Newman, Kathy Attmore, Jean Doe, Jill Woolley (Minutes)

1. Apologies: Jill Jones, Mary Drage, Cllr Dawne Brown, John Shepherd

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2018

The Minutes were agreed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 The Monolith light is still not working. Trish will liaise with Derek and send an email to Accent as they are supposed to respond to emails within 48 hours and we have never had a reply to our emails.

3.2 New Heating System: This heats adequately if the thermostat is set to 30°, although the heating does not reach the library staff behind the counter very well. The heating is now on for longer than in the past. Trish will do a comparison between the 2018 and 2019 winter quarters when she has the figures to hand.

3.3 Fire Assembly point notices have been ordered and Trish will do put these up before the next meeting.

3.4 Derek has the notice for the terracotta tiles in the corridor in hand.

3.5 The invoice for the heating system has been paid.

3.6 Trish will ask the Darcey Bussell people to return their Swifts key. She will also contact Mrs Rolfe and find out if Jason will be using the Swifts any more.

3.7 The light on the left of the main door and the one on the right of the fire doors still need attention. Derek will look into this.

3.8 Toilet rolls are now in the holders but no one is sure how this happened. Trish will chase Robin to see if he has a key.

3.9 Toilet siphons have now been replaced and are working properly. Trish now has the name of a man who she can contact direct if we need a plumber in the future, which should be cheaper.

4. Financial Report

4.1 Trish presented the accounts for April 2018 to January 2019.

4.2 The accounts will always have a carryover from the previous year because Trish sends out invoices at the end of March which is often not banked until April.

4.3 The service charge has decreased gradually over the past years.

4.4 The Hygiene Contract with Pristine has remained the same.

4.5 Water and Sewerage charges are now billed separately.

4.6 Jean asked whether we were going to increase charges. Trish said we were not considering this at present as we have money in hand to cover outgoings at present.

5. Bookings

5.1 We have been selected by South Cambs to hold the Exhibition for Design Statement from 3-8 pm on Thursday 25 April.

5.2 Bookings have picked up and weekends were busy in February and we already have some for March.

5.3 Kathy reported that she had had a complaint about a hirer coming in at 12 noon on Saturday and expecting the rooms to be empty. Derek never books until 12.30 on a Saturday to give the library time to clear up.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Kathy reported that Frances Rennie, Pilates, had found the rooms dirty over December/January and had to sweep the floor herself. If there is a party on a Sunday it is not possible for Kim to get in and clean before Pilates starts on Monday at 9 am, and there is the same problem on Wednesday mornings at 9 am as the rooms are often booked Tuesday evenings. Derek says people are expected to clear up after themselves and brushes etc. are available. A request to leave the rooms clean will be added to the booking Terms and Conditions.

6.2 The WI use non-recyclable cups which fill up the rubbish bins and it is annoying for the next users if Kim has not been in to clean. Trish has asked Kim to take extra waste to the Parish Council bin and will have a word with her.

6.3 There is also concern about recyclable rubbish. We do not have a blue bin. Slimming World fill up the bins with a lot of cardboard which could go into a blue or green bin if any tape is removed. Trish will ask Kim what she does with any cardboard which is left.

6.4 The Fire Door does not always close properly and this means the fire alarm will not set.

6.5 Kathy reported that people have complained that the front door does not close slowly like it used to and can sometimes snap shut very quickly. Derek will monitor.

6.6 There has been concern from hirers because a man who smells strongly of alcohol has been hanging round the building and also coming in while parties are going on. Kathy reported that he is a library member and appears 'harmless.' He should be politely asked to leave. Kathy will give him the library opening hours when she next sees him. Jill will do a sign saying 'Private Event' to be on the door when the Swifts is being used for private functions.

7. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 29 May 2019 at 7 pm in the Swifts.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.