

# Kingston Parish Council

## Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held at 8.00pm on 21 May 2015

### Present:

Tim Fitzjohn, Chairman, Kingston Parish Council  
James Clear, Julie Conder, Trish Dunlop, Councillors, Kingston Parish Council  
Peter Stokes, Clerk to Kingston Parish Council  
Tumi Hawkins, Councillor, South Cambridgeshire District Council

**Members of the public:** Janet Clear, Irene Heyman, Sue Dalgleish, Joan Reynolds, Donal O'Donnell, Linda Rimmer, Charlie Richmond, Suzy Stokes, Miki Ellar, Pat Draper, Simon Draper, Mark Stalham, Paul Owers, Melanie Owers, Jill Coleman.

The following reports were presented. Where a discussion followed or questions were asked, brief details of these are given. Full copies of the reports, where available, are attached as appendices.

1. **Chairman's report** presented by Tim Fitzjohn, Chairman of Kingston Parish Council. Report attached.

### Discussion:

- 1.1. Simon Draper asked if our County Councillor attended parish council meetings. He was told that Stephen Frost rarely attends parish council meetings. There was some discussion about what action should be taken to try and resolve this. Agreed to put it on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting. **Action: Clerk.**
- 1.2. Simon Draper raised questions regarding building work in the parish and the effect on neighbours. He pointed out that the new house being built next door to him at North Farm was still unfinished after 14 months, when it was expected to be finished in 8 months. There followed a discussion about unreasonable behaviour by builders. Tim Fitzjohn advised that this problem had been recently discussed by the parish council, following which a list of suggested conditions had been drawn up, intended for inclusion, where appropriate, in permissions granted for planning applications. When Kingston parish council responds favourably to planning application consultation, the response can include a request that in the event of the application being approved, one or more of these conditions is included in the approval documentation.

2. **Financial report** presented by Peter Stokes, Parish Clerk. Report attached.

### Discussion:

- 2.1. Janet Clear asked if would be possible to have a mirror positioned at the crossroads, as it is difficult to exit Field Road due to poor visibility to either side. Tim Fitzjohn said it was believed that mirrors on the highway are illegal, and the Highways Agency will not therefore provide them or permit them. The Clerk said he believes one of the reasons for not placing a mirror where it gives a view of one road from another road is the risk of headlight dazzle at night time. It was agreed to ask the Highways agency for their suggestions to improve visibility. **Action: Clerk.**
- 2.2. Melanie Owers pointed out that the willow tunnel at the playground needs some work to tie the willow whips back into a tunnel shape. To be added to the next workday at the playground. **Action: Clerk.**

3. **Open Spaces report** presented by James Clear, Parish Councillor and Open Spaces Officer. Report attached.

4. **Village Hall Report** presented by Mark Stalham, Chairman of Village Hall Management Committee. Report attached.

**Discussion:**

- 4.1. Miki Ellar asked what was going to happen to the wall mural. Mark Stalham replied that under Phase 2 of the village hall upgrade it was planned to ensure that a good quality photograph was taken of the mural, before it was covered up in such a way that it would not be visible in the refurbished hall, but would be preserved in case future generations wished to expose it. A framed copy of the photo would be displayed in the refurbished hall.
5. **Parochial Church Council report** presented by Janet Clear, PCC secretary. Full PCC annual report attached. Janet highlighted the following items:
- 5.1. 16<sup>th</sup> Century graffiti has been discovered by a specialist team on the inside of the church, revealing the names of three sisters who probably died during an outbreak of bubonic plague.
- 5.2. A very successful concert was held in the church on 1 May featuring The Gesualdo 6, a group of singers, graduates and undergraduates from Cambridge University.
- 5.3. The church's Gift Day will be held on 18 July, in combination with a Cream Tea on the Orchard being organised by the Parish Council.
- 5.4. The PCC offers its thanks to volunteers who on a regular basis have cleaned the church, arranged flowers, and joined in workdays to tackle various projects in the graveyard.
6. **Kingston Poor Land Charity report** presented by Donal O'Donnell, Trustee. Report attached.

**Discussion:**

- 6.1. Peter Stokes asked who had initiated the reported rent increase for the tenant who rents the field owned by the charity. Donal informed us that the tenant himself had suggested the rent should be increased.
- 6.2. Peter Stokes then asked if the Charity should – in the interests of its beneficiaries – ensure that the rent being charged was the maximum consistent with agricultural rents in general, and that advice on this might be more appropriately sought from an agricultural estate agent rather than from the tenant. Donal replied that they had not sought advice and felt the offer from the tenant was reasonable.
- 6.3. There was further general discussion over whether professional advice should be taken by the Trustees over setting the rent. There was no specific outcome with Donal confirming the trustees remain aware of the need to maximise income but currently have a surplus. The present composition of the parish means they have few potential recipients for financial assistance.
- 6.4. It was pointed out that having increased the rent and hence income the surplus would continue to grow. More funds should be put use for the benefit of the persons intended to be the recipients of financial assistance from the charity wherever possible.

7. **District Councillor's report** presented by Tumi Hawkins, District Councillor. Report attached.

**Discussion:**

- 7.1. Tumi was pressed on her action to improve broadband in Kingston. Tumi confirmed that she continues to email and generally 'make a nuisance' with the Broadband project coordinator but little progress is likely until options for alternate technology is available to bridge the gap where fibre is not an economic option.
- 7.2. Tumi agreed to raise a formal question about this at a full Council meeting that would then require a written answer.

**8. Open Forum**

- 8.1. Donal O'Donnell asked if faster broadband would be coming to Kingston. Tim Fitzjohn advised that despite protests from Kingston Parish Council, there was no assurance that the fibre optic system which has brought superfast broadband to many parts of the county would be extended to Kingston.
- 8.2. Miki Ellar suggested that if everyone wrote a letter of protest about poor broadband speed in Kingston it might have some effect. Tim Fitzjohn agreed that the more letters were written from residents, the more we were likely to achieve an improvement. He suggested that while it was better for such letters to be individually written rather than all being copied from a template, the parish council could provide some basic information to assist residents in drafting suitable letters of protest. This information would include how to measure broadband speed, and who to write to.

**Action: Tim Fitzjohn.**

Signed.....

Date.....

## Chairman's Report – Thursday 21 May 2015

Kingston is a relatively small Parish in terms of property and residences although it covers a significant area. Because of this the Parish Council has limited resources but aims to maintain level spending and hence precept where possible.

The Council meets every two months with the facility for extraordinary meetings to be held between the fixed dates for matters of urgent importance.

I would remind everybody this meeting is not a Parish Council Meeting but a meeting at which all residents are free and encouraged to speak on any issues they may have.

### Kingston Parish Councillors May 2014 to May 2015

The Parish Council for the last 12 months has comprised the undernoted:

Tim FitzJohn – Chairman

James Clear – Vice Chairman and Open Spaces

Julie Condor – Finance, Webmaster, Playground User Group Representative Keith Tan

Trish Dunlop – Footpaths

At the parish council meeting on Tuesday 12 May, I was re-elected Chairman and James Clear was re-elected Vice-Chairman. The other councillors agreed to continue with the offices previously held.

### The precept and development of the Village Hall

12 months ago Simon Draper explained the funding arrangement that the Parish Council had agreed to support for the redevelopment of the Village Hall. Last May a difficult position arose where the development had offers of funding pending but these were not finally secured. Timescales for these offers were drawing close and the project was in danger of collapsing. There was a potential shortfall of £25,000 and the previous Chairman had recommended that the Parish Council supported the redevelopment by an additional loan of £25,000, this loan only to be drawn upon if there was a shortfall in funding.

The newly elected Parish Council supported on the basis that if the grant funding became fully available the PC would not need to contribute further. Shortly afterwards the Village Hall Committee was able to confirm that they had been successful in their bids for funding and the additional support from Parish Council was not required.

The development was able to be started in February this year and I am sure the refurbishment will be a superb asset to the Village.

### Community Plan

The Community Plan was finally prepared and I presented this to South Cambridgeshire District Council. This was well received and a copy of the Plan has been distributed to every house in the Parish.

The Plan is modest in its aims and at the present time most of the collective energy of the Parish has been in the Village Hall redevelopment. The Plan needs to be continually updated to reflect changing needs and aspirations and this will be back on the Parish Council's Agenda over the next 12 months.

### Planning

Kingston appears to be an island surrounded by extensive Planning Applications for significant private house development. The process continues to be confusing and it is difficult to gain an overall picture of how many houses and what wider developments are proposed around Cambridge.

At a local level the views represented in the Community Plan suggest the nature and general rural appearance of Kingston should be preserved where possible. This is not easy to reconcile with the need to upgrade the Village housing stock in certain areas and also to enable freedom of development to individual Property Owners.

I would remind everybody that the Parish Council are only 5 representatives from the Parish. Anybody is welcome to attend a Parish Council Meeting and I would encourage comment from the floor on Planning Applications being discussed.

#### Broadband

Despite fibre to the cabinet in Toft, Kingston still remains at the end of mile and a half of elderly copper wire. Despite discussions with South Cambs we are still unclear if and when significant improvement will be made to broadband speeds for the village and the infrastructure to support this. There are potentially further funds available later this year but no detail on where or how these will be spent is available.

#### Thank You

I am ably supported by Julie Condor who keeps an eye on the Parish Council finances and compliance with good financial practices.

My co councillors always provide strong comment at Council meetings and this ensures that decisions taken by the parish council are in the wider interests of the Parish.

The Chairman continues to be ably supported by our Clerk, Peter Stokes, who keeps us informed of changing legislation and provides a stable platform for the Parish Council to operate from.

I would also like to thank our South Cambs District Council representative Tumi Hawkins for her continuing input and advice.

At County level we are represented by Stephen Frost. As a Parish Council we would like to engage more actively with Cambridgeshire County Council and hope Stephen can support us in this. Particularly we need access to County for issues around Highways and Transport.

Tim FitzJohn  
19 May 2015

## Kingston Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting 21 May 2015 Clerk's Report

I have attached a summary of income and expenditure for the year 2014/15, and will now highlight a few items from this.

### 1. **Grass and Hedgecutting**

Stuart Buchan Landscapes have provided satisfactory performance so after agreeing to keep their increase at the level of the increase in RPI over the 12 month period, they are again our contractors this year. We continue to receive a payment from the County Council for cutting of grass verges within the village, and from Mrs Heyman for cutting an area of grass owned by her adjoining Field Row.

### 2. **Grants**

Payments totalling £14,555 pounds have been made on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee as the balance of a grant made by the parish council towards the village hall improvement project. In total £20,000 has been granted, some of which was paid last year, and this has been financed by a loan of the same amount taken out by the parish council, repayable over 20 years. The repayment instalments will in turn be financed by a small increase in the parish precept, which will have the effect of spreading the cost to residents over a number of years. The increase in council tax for the average house in Kingston as a result of the loan is less than £9 per year, or about 17p per week.

Grants were also made to the Parochial Church Council of £773 for graveyard and lawnmower maintenance, £160 towards the cleaning of the WWI plaque in the church, and £470 towards Parish Magazine costs. The magazine continues to be delivered to all households in the parish free of charge.

### 3. **Insurance**

The insurance premium for the year was £677, the same as last year as we had committed to a five year agreement. However our chairman and resident insurance expert, Tim Fitzjohn, noticed an important shortcoming in our cover relating to member and employee indemnity. Our insurers were unable to provide this additional cover, so we are in the process of looking for another insurer which can provide the missing cover.

### 4. **S106 Money**

This is money sometimes payable to a local authority by a developer under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as a condition of granting planning permission. Typically it is used to provide a local amenity such as a school or playground. Kingston Parish Council has been paid £5321 under this section, in respect of the development at Summerhill, Tinker's Lane. Within certain conditions, this will be used in due course by the parish council for the benefit of the community, and they would welcome any suggestions.

### 5. **Change of Banker**

We previously banked with the Alliance and Leicester, which then became part of Santander Bank. In 2013, they changed their internet banking in such a way that we could no longer use it. We have now changed to the Unity Trust Bank, which is proving entirely satisfactory. It is fully regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, like the other major banks, and so is considered safe.

Before choosing Unity Trust Bank, we did try to open an account with Lloyds. Their tortuous system for opening a new account eventually defeated me, and after obtaining the authority of the parish council to move to Unity Trust Bank instead, I complained to Lloyds about their awkward system. I'm pleased to tell you that they were so apologetic, they sent us a cheque for £100, which accounts for most of the 'miscellaneous income' section on the financial statement.

### 6. **Bank Balances**

Our total bank balances at the end of the year, after adjustment for VAT, stood at £17724, rather higher than usual due mainly to the S106 money.

The internal audit for the 2013/14 accounts has been completed without problems and the Parish Council has approved the accounts. The Annual Return has been sent to the external auditors. We

do not expect any difficulties with this, and when the result of the audit is received it will be published in the usual way.

Peter Stokes  
Parish Clerk

**KINGSTON PARISH COUNCIL - FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR 2014/15**

2013/14 £		2014/15 £
<b>INCOME</b>		
8230.00	Precept	8605.00
303.55	Grasscutting	303.55
70.00	Rebate from Kingston Oil Club	0.00
7.76	Interest earned	7.78
60.00	Allotment rent	60.00
0.00	S106 payment from SCDC	5321.75
0.00	Loan to finance grant to VHMC	19975.00
	VAT reclaim (2012/13 and 2013/14)	1575.99
0.00	Miscellaneous	105.37
<b>8671.31</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>35954.44</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
677.13	Insurance	677.13
140.00	Audit fees	140.00
2306.94	Grass and hedge cutting (contract)	2173.44
1089.00	Clerk's salary	1018.38
0.00	Footpath lighting	222.22
176.24	Subscriptions	166.04
961.50	Grants	933.26
5510.54	Village Hall improvement project	14555.00
74.00	Asset maintenance	352.69
470.00	Parish magazine	470.00
203.78	Miscellaneous	751.26
	VAT (reclaimable)	492.49
<b>11609.13</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>21951.91</b>
<b>INCOME MINUS EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>-2937.82</b>		<b>14002.53</b>
<b>BANK BALANCE AT 31 Mar</b>		
3229.61		17232.14
	<b>Change last year to this year</b>	<b>14002.53</b>



**Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> May at 8pm in the Village Hall**  
**Report from the Open Spaces Officer**

The Role of Open Spaces Officer is to deal with any problems relating to the land owned by the Parish Council or for which it is responsible, these are:-

The Village Orchard  
The Village Allotments  
The Recreation Ground  
The Village Green  
The Swards

The Village Orchard has again benefited from a work day in February. The Fruit Trees were pruned and hedges cut back. Hopefully many of you will enjoy the Orchard Tea Party which will take place on the 18<sup>th</sup> July in conjunction with the Church Gift day.

The deluge of rain last August and the wet winter has made us all aware of the importance of the Village ditches and drains. Peter Stokes and his team carried out some remedial work to the drainage in Cranes Lane; this may have to become a regular routine. It is important to remind Villagers that they are responsible for keeping the ditches at the front of their property, open and operative. Help can always be arranged if needed.

The bad weather and increasing traffic have also taken a toll on the Grass Verges throughout the Village. A work day was organised to carry out reinstatement and re-seeding. It is disappointing to note that after a few days much of the repair work has been damaged by inconsiderate motorists.

The Recreation Ground is in need of some minor maintenance and a work day will shortly be organised to carry this out.

The Allotments are all let and under cultivation.

No role has been found for The Swards and this continues as a Habitat area for Wildlife.

James Clear  
Kingston Parish Council Open  
Spaces Officer.

# **Kingston Village Hall Management Committee - Report for the Annual Parish Meeting, May 2015**

The Village Hall Management Committee is run by a dedicated core of nine people but a recruitment drive has failed to elicit new members. However, an increasing number of other villagers, some new, others long-standing, regularly help with social events. A circle of helpers may be the way forward as many people lack the time to commit to committees etc. 'Virtual' meetings and email enable us to keep meetings to a minimum and this should be stressed when trying to attract new members.

## **Events**

It has been a lower key year than normal, since we effectively lost use of the hall from 1 February. Since May 2014, the Committee and helpers have run what has now become the annual Village BBQ, an International Evening, Christmas Bring-and-Buy Sale, Plant and Produce Sale and finishing with the sell-out and very competitive Quiz 'n' Chips evening. It has been hard work to maintain the momentum of last year when the monthly Pub Night was regularly attracting 30-40 people. Katherine and Mark Stalham have enlisted the support of a wider range of villagers in running the 'early' and 'late' sessions and hopefully the renovated hall will stimulate interest in the Pub Evening once again as well as making it easier to manage stock levels.

## **Village Hall Renovation.**

The Parish Council has been very supportive of the whole project and they agreed to underwrite a loan of £20K ensure that the Phase 1 could progress. Work commenced two weeks later than scheduled owing to grant application regulations regarding securing ALL funding before ground-breaking and issues relating to bees and asbestos but by the time this report is read to the Parish Council, the new roof structure should have begun to appear.

Phase 1 of the renovation is only taking place thanks to the generosity of a number of grants. The following awards are the most notable: FCC Environment funding from WREN provided £49.5K, Biffa Award £37.7K, The AmeyCespa Community Fund £20K, all via the Landfill Communities Fund, along with South Cambridgeshire District Council (£38.5K). Cambridgeshire ACRE has also provided a £20K loan to aid cash flow in the first 2 months of the build, which will be paid back fully on completion of Phase 1. Without these funds, this project would not have been possible as, despite considerable fundraising efforts by village residents, the Village Hall Management Funds fell well short of the amount required to attempt any major renovation but were nevertheless instrumental in achieving the 10 % self-funding requirement of the grant-awarding bodies which was publicised last year.

## **Repairs to Hall**

There is a need to proceed with Phase 2 just as soon as Phase 1 can be completed and funds are available, since the floor and windows in particular are in need of urgent renovation. WREN have already made encouraging comments about returning to them for a second grant as soon as Phase 1 is complete but we will need to look for other sources of funding as for Phase 1. There will be a Village Hall Management Committee to discuss this on completion of Phase 1.

## **Finances (Chris Reid)**

Owing to the constant flux of money out of and into the Hall accounts during the renovation, it is difficult to give an exact balance, but as of 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the current loan balance is £41.5K after having paid out around 20 % of the total build cost (£140K) for Phase 1. Financing for Phase 1 breaks down to two issues: (a) ensuring enough cash is available to pay for the work on time because building invoices arrive ahead of grant payments and (b) ensuring that enough capital exists (through grants and fund raising) to pay for the entire work even if there are slight cost overruns. Both of these issues are currently looking fine, as the £20K temporary ACRE loan is providing liquidity, while thanks to grants and fundraising, there is enough capital to cover close to 110 % of the total build cost.

## **Future events**

Events organised by the Village Hall Management Committee have purposely ceased on commencement of the renovation, since the village hall was used for most of the autumn/winter events and pub evenings. However, there will be events commencing in the summer, including the BBQ at South Sea Farm (27<sup>th</sup> June) and grand opening ceremony with a local celebratory attendance in July or August following completion of Phase 1.

Finally, I would like to express my personal thanks to the Committee, to whom I delegate much work and continue to show what a great team we have in Kingston. In particular, I would like to thank Peter Stokes for acting as project manager for the renovation as he has been able to oversee the building work on a week-by-week basis. Lastly, Chris Reid has had to juggle all of the various demands of the grant-awarding bodies and keep the accounts balanced.

Mark Stalham

Chairman

Kingston Village Hall Management Committee

13<sup>th</sup> May 2015

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH  
COUNCIL OF THE CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS AND SAINT ANDREW,  
KINGSTON – MARCH 2014 – 2015**

**1. Statement required under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956**

The Parochial Church Council agrees to cooperate with the Team Rector in charge of the Papworth Team Ministry (Team East) in promoting in the parish of Kingston the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

**2. Members of the Council who have served during the current financial year until the approval of the accounts on March 31st 2015:**

Rev Dr Alexandra Clarke (Team Vicar)  
Mrs C Allison  
Mrs J Clear (Secretary)  
Mr J Diggle (Churchwarden)  
Rev Paul Gildersleve (Associate Priest)  
Mrs M Ray  
Mr P Reynolds (Churchwarden)  
Mrs L Rimmer (Treasurer)  
Mr E T Smith

**3. The Parochial Church Council holds regular meetings on a quarterly basis. Special meetings are called from time to time to deal with urgent business.**

**4. The following were the principal matters dealt with by the PCC March 2014 – March 2015:**

- (a) Arrangements for Festival services
- (b) Church Fete on 12<sup>th</sup> July raised £1,731 (£1,367 in 2012)
- (c) Fund raising events: 'Ride and Stride' raised £220, carol singing £462, flower arranging £40, book and card sales in church £295
- (d) Collections for charities at festivals
- (e) Volunteer work day – churchyard maintenance
- (f) Church opening every day throughout year
- (g) Annual inspection of fabric
- (h) Meetings with DAC and others regarding churchyard walls
- (i) Fire extinguisher inspection and boiler inspection and repair
- (j) Review of worship questionnaire
- (k) Refurbishment of war memorial plaque and photographs WWI soldiers
- (l) Installation of 'Church Open' sign in churchyard
- (m) Consideration of Fund Raising ideas and plans for concert
- (n) Repairs to safe and collection plate following vandalism
- (o) Registration of title to Churchwardens' Field (fees £319)

**5. Finances**

The main funding for the church has been donations by Banker's Orders and collections at church services. Grants were received from the Parish Council: £650 towards the upkeep of the churchyard; £123 towards repairing church mower; £470 to subsidise the Parish and Church Magazine; and £160 towards the cost of cleaning the war memorial. Income for the year to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2014 for the General Purposes Account was £11,938 (£20,662 in 2013) and expenditure £16,069 (£15,669 in 2013), with an excess of payments over receipts (deficit) of £4,131 (an excess of receipts over payments of £4,993 – surplus – in 2013). Income for the Restoration Fund was £3,606. A Secure Trust Savings Account was opened with £10,000 from the Restoration Fund.

Balances at 31.12.14:

General Purposes Account	1,993
Restoration Fund Current A/C	6,006
Secure Trust Bank (Restoration Fund)	10,089
Todd Fund	717

The Parish Share in 2014 was £8,610 (£8,334 in 2013).

Sums from collections at Easter (£89), Harvest Festival (£40), Remembrance (£50), and Christmas (£45) were donated to charities.

6. **The Electoral Roll** in March 2015, before revision, stands at 19 (21 in 2014).

7. **Attendance at services**

Average Sunday attendances

Service	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
H. C.	10	11	9	9	7	6	5	5	6
E. P.	12	9	8	8	8	9	7	7	6
F. S.	15	16	14	14	13	16	16	13	13

Attendance at the major festivals

Festival	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Easter	15	21	12	41	18	21	26	31	49
Harvest	29	32	28	23	21	34	43	16	21
Carol Service	45	40	24	33	26	45	38	75	31
Christmas Eve + Day	28	36	30	20	38	34	42	46	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>131</b>

The figures for Holy Communion, Evening Prayer and Family Service were stable. Attendance at the Carol Service was down significantly but at Easter visitors boosted numbers. NB there was no Christmas Eve service in 2014.

*Alexandra Clarke*

26/3/15

# **Kingston Pools' Land Charity**

## **Annual Report 2015**

Total in bank at 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2014 was £6863.50

Income was £802.53

This is greater than in previous years and is due to an increase in rental income.

A total of £390 was paid in 2014. This comprised of gifts to 3 school leavers and Christmas donations to two families.

Mrs Joan Reynolds & Dr Donal O'Donnell  
Trustees

# District Councillor's Annual Report – Caldecote Ward

## May 2015

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### 1. General

The makeup of South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) for the 2014/15 municipal year, was: Conservatives 35, Liberal Democrats 13, Independents 8, Labour 1. Following the elections on 7<sup>th</sup> May, this changed to Conservatives 38, Liberal Democrats 11, Independents 7, Labour 1

I served as a member of the Planning Committee, was Opposition Spokesperson for the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio, member of Advisory Group for Ermine Street Ltd (SCDC as a private landlord) and a member of the Advisory Board of the Little Footsteps Childrens Centre in Caldecote.

At Parish level, I have worked with the Parish councils on district related issues as planning, environmental health (drainage/flooding), and held councillor drop-in surgeries where residents could come and discuss any issues or problems that they had or needed assistance to help resolve. I have also assisted local groups in their application for funding for a number of local projects. I also continue to be your Broadband Champion.

I want to thank all three Parish Councils for their support. I will continue to work together with you to get the best outcomes possible for all our villages on all matters to do with SCDC.

### 2. Planning

#### 2.1 Draft Local Development Plan (LDP) 2011-2031

The Draft LDP and supporting documents were submitted for examination on 28 March 2014 to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (CLG) via Planning Inspectorate. The Secretary of State appointed Laura Graham as the Planning Inspector to carry out the independent examination to determine if the plan is sound or not.

SCDC and Cambridge City Council submitted their plans jointly, so that the two plans could be examined together, due to the fact that the two local authorities are closely linked geographically.

The examination is divided into blocks of hearings: Block 1 took place in November 2014 (legal process, overall spatial vision, housing need, employment and retail. Infrastructure monitoring and viability, Block 2 in February 2015 (Green belt general issues, boundary changes in City and boundary changes in South Cambs, transport issues), Block 3 in March 2015 (Housing land supply and delivery) and Block 4 in April 2015 (Areas of major change/development on the edge of Cambridge). The examination is now paused till further notice. The Inspector has not given any indication of how she is thinking regarding the issues already examined and discussed.

#### 2.2 Waterbeach Appeals and Speculative Developments

SCDC lost two planning appeals in Waterbeach, where developers had been refused planning to develop two sites that were outside the village development framework. The planning inspector determined that contrary to legislation, SCDC did not have a 5-year housing land supply, falling short by about 1300 houses.

This has subsequently led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by SCDC and Cambridge City (see below). More worryingly is that it has led to developers submitting speculative applications in the district, with one of those being in Toft (PlanSurv-6 Houses) and another in Caldecote (Gladmans-125 houses). The Toft application was refused, the Gladmans proposal has not yet been submitted to SCDC.

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## 2.2 Greater Cambridge Joint Housing Trajectory

SCDC and Cambridge City, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in September 2014 under the duty to co-operate that the housing trajectories for the two areas should be considered together, for the purposes of calculating 5-year housing land supply. The document can be found at <https://goo.gl/IzEisp>.

This followed the ruling by another planning inspector in two appeal cases in Waterbeach that SCDC did not have a 5-year housing land supply. The MoU relates specifically to the phasing of the delivery, rather than the housing numbers. This type of agreement is without precedent, and it remains to be seen if it is accepted by the planning Inspector Laura Graham, for the purposes of determining the soundness of the Draft LDP.

## 2.3 Planning Application for West Cambourne

A proposal by McA Developments (Bovis & Taylor Wimpey) to build 2,350 houses was submitted to SCDC. The proposal covers the land, mainly within Caxton Parish, from Cambourne up to the A1198 west and the A428 north. It proposes to include one secondary and two primary schools, shops and community space, offices and light industrial employment areas, segregated cycle and pedestrian routes etc. The Council is now considering the application, which deviates from the circa 1700 earmarked for the site in the Local Development Plan

## 2.4 Northstowe

Although the planning approval was given in April 2014 for Phase 1 for 1500 houses, primary school, mixed use local centre etc., nothing has been built yet.

The Council considered the application for Phase 2 for a further 3,500 houses in April, but did not grant permission as the committee had very grave concerns about many aspects of the application such as the amount of money available for the civic/community buildings, and the watering down of the green energy to be installed.

The affordable housing element in this development has also reduced from the Council's own target of 40% to just 20%, this at a time when there is a great need in the district for houses that people can afford based on the average wage.

The application will be considered again in July. Northstowe has been 15 years in the planning and is not there yet. Further information on the development can be found at [www.Northstowe.com](http://www.Northstowe.com).

## 3. Finance

The Central Government grant for 2014/15 was £2.65 million, to provide the usual services to the communities. The Council is now generating income to replace some of the shortfall in the grants funding through investment in housing company (Ermine Street) to provide properties to the rental sector. The rest of the shortfall was covered through "efficiency savings", especially in waste collection (reduction of winter service collection for green waste), and strategic partnerships with other local authorities to share services.

The funding for 2015/16 is £1.83 million, an overall reduction of 76% in the time since 2010/11 when the council received £7.823million. The reduction is expected to continue over the coming years.

### 3.1 Council Tax

The SCDC element of the council tax for 2014/15 was **£122.86 for a Band D**. For the new municipal year 2015/16, it has increased again by 1.99% to **£125.31**, an increase of £2.45 on the previous year. The council tax figures for each village are:



	<b>Parish Precept</b>	<b>SCDC</b>	<b>Cambs County</b>	<b>Cambs Police</b>	<b>Cambs Fire</b>	<b>Total</b>
Caldecote	£99.99	£125.31	£1144.26	£181.35	£64.26	£1615.17
Kingston	£73.80	£125.31	£1144.26	£181.35	£64.26	£1588.98
Toft	£73.53	£125.31	£1144.26	£181.35	£64.26	£1588.71

The previous figures were: Caldecote £105.50 (reduction of £5.51), Kingston £72.55 (increase of £1.25), Toft £74.55 (reduction of £1.22), County £1121.94 (increase of £22.32), Police including Crime Commissioner £181.35 (no change) and Fire is £62.26 (£2). This gives a typical Band D increase of £26.77 (without the parish precepts).

### **3.2 New Homes Bonus**

SCDC projected to receive £3.2million for 2014/15 and expecting to receive up to £4.15million for 2015/16. This is monies from government given to high growth areas to help with delivering new facilities and infrastructure, and is determined by the number of net new homes built in the municipal year.

This funding is expected to be used to plug the gap in the Council's shortfall in funding from Central Government

### **3.3 Joint Services**

SCDC has agreed joint working with two councils. It now shares Building Control with Huntingdonshire District Council, Legal and ICT services with Cambridge City Council, allegedly saving up to £1.25 million. Waste collection is shared with City Council, allegedly saving around £700,000.

## **4. Economic Development**

SCDC continues to say that South Cambridgeshire is open for business, and that it will continue to support local businesses and assist businesses to move to the area.

### **4.1 Business Workshops**

The council once again ran the now annual Business Support Service, through Exemplas. This is in the form of half day workshops to help those running or thinking of starting a business in the district and cover subjects focusing on the specific needs of local businesses, including business planning, recruitment and websites and social media.

Each workshop costs £10 +VAT, and anyone interested in attending could reserve a place by telephone 0844 346 0755 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm) and pay by credit or debit card. Full details for future events can be found by visiting [www.exemplas.com/southcambs](http://www.exemplas.com/southcambs)

## **5. Housing**

### **5.1 Ermine Street Ltd**

SCDC set up a property company with the objective of generating income for the council. The company, formerly SCDC Ltd, and now renamed Ermine Street Ltd, will buy properties on the open market and then rent them to the private sector at market rates and the social sector at RSL rates. It is also planning to build houses to rent on land that it currently owns that is suitable for development.

The scheme is being financed by SCDC borrowing £7million from the Public Works Loan Board at a favourable rate, and lend to Ermine Street Ltd at market rate, the difference being the income generated for SCDC.

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## **6. Transport – City Deal**

### **6.1 City Deal**

The Greater Cambridge City Deal aims to facilitate the continued growth of the Cambridge Phenomenon, by investing in infrastructure and housing in the sub-region. The funding from Government is £100m in the first 5-years, £200m in the second 5-year period, and £200m in the next 5-year period.

In January 2015, the City Deal Executive board to agree the projects to be carry out in the first five years. These are Milton Road bus priority (£23m), Madingley Road bus priority (£34.6), Histon Road bus priority (£4.3), A428 to M11 segregated bus route / A428 corridor Park and Ride (£24.5m), City centre capacity improvements / cross-city cycle improvements (to include Hills Road in the scope) (£22.6m), A1307 corridor to include bus priority / A1307 additional Park and Ride £39m), Chisholm Trail cycle links / Chisholm Trail bridge (£8.4). The total allocated spend is £156.4 million worth of works, and only £100 is certain. The rest will need to be found from somewhere

### **6.2 A421/A428 Alliance**

The Councils (South Cambs, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire) through which the A428 and A421 pass through from West Cambridge to Bedford, formed an alliance with a view to petitioning the Government to find the funds to carry out work to dual the road from Caxton Gibbet to St Neots, and make junction changes to fit for purpose. At the last meeting in April, we were informed that the project has been given approval and that the funding was set aside and works expected to commence by 2020.

At every opportunity, I continue to raise the issue of the improvements that are needed to the Girton Interchange to provide a route from the A428 West onto the M11 to bypass Madingley Rise.

## **7. Broadband**

### **7.1 Race To Infinity-Caldecote**

I re-iterate once again that superfast fibre optic broadband is available in Highfields Caldecote and Childerley. There are still cases where residents are being told by BT Retail that it is not available or will never be available. This is not correct. I established a procedure with BT Openreach whereby these issues can be and are being resolved, so please contact me if BT is insisting you can't get superfast broadband. BT has in the past struggled to cope with the demand but should now have in place a process for incremental capacity increase.

### **7.2 Connecting Cambridgeshire Project – Old Caldecote, Toft and Kingston**

The Comberton exchange which serves Caldecote, Kingston and Toft has now been upgraded. Residents of Toft now have superfast broadband available to them. Unfortunately, Caldecote and Kingston, being furthest away from the cabinets at Toft, still do not have fibre broadband available.

The County Council is now putting together a program for getting superfast broadband to these areas that are considered “difficult to reach” and as your Broadband Champion, I will continue to lobby on your behalf for this work to be done speedily.

## **8. Councillor Drop-in surgery/Case Work**

I have been holding and will continue to hold drop-in surgeries on the first Monday of each month at Toft People's Hall from 6pm to 7pm, and on the first Thursday of each month, at the Caldecote Village Hall from 7pm to 7.50pm. This is so that residents can come and have a chat with me about any issues they wish to raise or is bothering them or want me to help them with at SCDC.

Thank you to those who have dropped and I hope to see many more people over the coming year.

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Please feel free to bookmark my website <http://www.tumihawkins.org.uk> so that you can read in more detail about some of the issues that I've reported on here, and of course for information in the coming months.

My contact details are as shown below.

*Tumi*

Tumi Hawkins  
21-May-2015

<b>Email me @:</b>	<a href="mailto:tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk">tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk</a>
<b>Follow on twitter:</b>	<a href="http://twitter.com/CouncillorTumi">http://twitter.com/CouncillorTumi</a>
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<b>Call me on:</b>	01954 210840