

Kingston Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting held at 8.00pm on 9 March 2016

Present:

Tim Fitzjohn, Chairman (TF)
Julie Conder (JCo)
Keith Tan (KT)
Trish Dunlop (TD)
Peter Stokes, Clerk
Tumi Hawkins (SCDC)

1. Apologies

1.1. James Clear

2. Minutes of last meeting

2.1. Accepted

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1. **3.2.1 Communications problems with County Councillor:** TF advised that he has spoken to the chairman of Toft parish council who advised by neighbouring Parish Councils that they have similar problems. Possible next moves are for TF to contact the leader of the Conservative group on CCC, the chairman of CCC, and/or our local MP Heidi Allen. **Action: TF.**
- 3.2. **7.1 Vacant allotment plot:** the plot is now let to a Mr James Clarke of Caldecote. No rent has been charged for the current (part) season.
- 3.3. **4.4.1 Overgrown hedge in Church Lane:** this has now been cut.
- 3.4. **9.7 Drain clearing workday, ditch outside The Old Farm House:** the Clerk has approached Mr Aiden Crawshaw, son of the owner of The Old Farm House, who has agreed to clear the ditch outside the house. The workday has been set for 19 March, at which time it is hoped to clear the most blocked parts of the ditch and drain in Crane's Lane, particularly culverts under drives. The Highways dept has promised to come back with a jetter crew when this work has been done to clear out the drain under the road.

4. Correspondence

4.1. Terry Osborn has complained of bird-scarer gas guns going off at night. It seems this was a one-off – the problem has now ceased. No further action.

5. County Councillor's report

5.1. No report

6. District Councillor's report

- 6.1. SCDC has agreed a 4% increase in council tax.
6.2. For other details see the full report Appendix A.

7. Open Spaces report

7.1. No report

8. Review of Kingston Community Led Plan

- 8.1. TF advised that our present plan has is guidance only and has no enforceable legal effect. A Neighbourhood Plan which has more legal standing has a more structured format and must be developed to be in conformity with the Local Development Plan. TF has signed up to a ½-day workshop on constructing a Neighbourhood Plan in 3 weeks' time, and will report back at the next meeting. **Action: TF.**

9. Local Liaison Forum meeting

- 9.1. TF attended this meeting on 7 Mar. He reported that the purpose of the meeting was to involve local parishes and communities in parts of the implementation of two major road transport projects in the Cambridge 'New Deal'. The two projects are: improvements to the M11 between junctions 11 and 13, and improvements to the A428 and A1303 between Caxton Gibbet and the city. Envisaged improvements include busways and access to Park and Ride sites.

10. Clerk's report

- 10.1. **Bi-monthly report** – previously circulated. See Appendix B. There were two queries: the expenditure YTD for both Clerk's salary and Subscriptions appeared to be already over budget. The Clerk agreed to investigate and report back. **Action: Clerk.**
- 10.2. **Invoices for payment:**
- 10.2.1. CCC, street lighting energy £161.80. Agreed for payment.
- 10.3. **Dog waste bins/litter bins:** two promised installation timetables have been missed. The Clerk is chasing progress. **Action: Clerk.**
- 10.4. **2016 Local Highway Improvement initiative:** We have been informed that our latest bid (for speed humps) has been successful. The Clerk is chasing progress to implement last year's bid, also successful, for a junction sign for Crane's Lane. **Action: Clerk.**
- 10.5. **2017 grass cutting contract:** agreed to accept the Buchan's Landscapes quote at the same price as last year. The contract value with the additional task of clearing brambles on the Toft road permissive path is £2284.24 + VAT.
- 10.6. **Workday 19 March and litterpick 16 April:** dates to be noted. **Action: all.**
- 10.7. **Planning applications:** the Clerk voiced a concern that the agreed procedure in Standing Order 13.4 (which defines a procedure for dealing with planning applications between meetings) is not legal as a) it allows a single councillor to take a formal decision and b) it allows a formal decision to be taken without a meeting and its attendant formalities of agenda, minutes etc. Although the decision is confirmed at a subsequent meeting, this is too late for any change as the deadline has by then passed. Agreed to seek advice from professional organisations (CAPALC and SLCC) and/or other local parish clerks. **Action: Clerk.**
- 10.8. **Annual Parish Meeting format:** in an attempt to make the meeting shorter and more interesting it was agreed to trial a new format. Reports would be invited as usual, but instead of each presenter reading his/her report word for word at the meeting, reports would be published before the meeting and made available on the website. Emailed or printed copies would be offered to anybody who wants them. At the meeting, reports would not be read, but questions invited. These changes will be detailed in the April and May parish magazines. Opinions on the new format will be sought at the meeting on 19 May. **Action: Clerk.**
- 10.9. **Playground report:** Some of the timbers at the entrance to the tunnels have rotted and need replacing. Agreed to approach the supplier (Playdale) for a repair under guarantee as it was felt that the life of the timbers was unacceptably short. **Action: Clerk.**

11. Planning

- 11.1. **S/3212/15/PA** Prior approval of change of use at Kingston Pastures Farm, Old Wimpole Road: this notification is for information only. Agreed to establish why the usual consultation procedure was not followed. **Action Clerk.**
- 11.2. **S/3069/15/LB** Ground floor WC and shower at Old Farm House: granted by SCDC.
- 11.3. **S2897/15/FL** Replacement garage at Crossways Cottage: granted by SCDC.

12. **Items for next meeting:** none

13. **Date of next meeting:** 10 May 2016

Meeting ended at 22.10

Signed.....

Date.....

South Cambridgeshire District Councillor's Monthly Report March 2016

1. Finance – South Cambs District Council Budget for 2016-17

The SCDC budget for 2016/17 was debated at full council on 24 February 2016. All parties agreed that the budget was the best that we could have, given the very difficult situation the Council found itself, especially in light of the reduced funding from Westminster.

Estimated expenditure for the year is £17,821,580. The Council receives some grants from government, but is expected to generate the balance needed and/or find alternative income. The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) which was £1.806 million in 2015-16 is now reduced by £880,000 or 48.7% to just £0.92million for 2016-17. It is expected to reduce to £0 (yes, Zero) by 2018-19.

The Retained Business Rates (RBR) which is the proportion of the business rates we collect and retain for use within the district is expected to be £3.604 million. We will also receive a Rural Services Grant of £129,850 and a small transition grant of £75,840. We hope to get £5.265 million in New Homes Bonus. To balance the books the council needs to raise circa £7.852million from Council Tax!

The council agreed to increase council tax across the board by £5, which is an increase of 4% on the previous year. But if we didn't do that, we'd have a very big financial hole to fill. The table below shows the council tax bill for each village in the ward.

Caldecote

	£ Band A	£ Band B	£ Band C	£ Band D	£ Band E	£ Band F	£ Band G	£ Band H
County	778.08	907.76	1037.44	1167.12	1426.48	1685.84	1945.2	2334.24
Police	122.10	142.45	162.80	183.15	223.85	264.55	305.25	366.30
District	86.87	101.35	115.83	130.31	159.27	188.23	217.18	260.62
Fire	43.68	50.96	58.24	65.52	80.08	94.64	109.20	131.04
Parish	66.66	77.77	88.88	99.99	122.21	144.43	166.65	199.98
Total	1097.39	1280.29	1463.19	1646.09	2011.89	2377.69	2743.48	3292.18

Toft

	£ Band A	£ Band B	£ Band C	£ Band D	£ Band E	£ Band F	£ Band G	£ Band H
County	778.08	907.76	1037.44	1167.12	1426.48	1685.84	1945.2	2334.24
Police	122.10	142.45	162.80	183.15	223.85	264.55	305.25	366.30
District	86.87	101.35	115.83	130.31	159.27	188.23	217.18	260.62
Fire	43.68	50.96	58.24	65.52	80.08	94.64	109.20	131.04
Parish	41.24	48.11	54.99	61.86	75.61	89.35	103.10	123.72
Total	1071.97	1250.63	1429.3	1607.96	1965.29	2322.61	2679.93	3215.92

Kingston

	£ Band A	£ Band B	£ Band C	£ Band D	£ Band E	£ Band F	£ Band G	£ Band H
County	778.08	907.76	1037.44	1167.12	1426.48	1685.84	1945.2	2334.24
Police	122.10	142.45	162.80	183.15	223.85	264.55	305.25	366.30
District	86.87	101.35	115.83	130.31	159.27	188.23	217.18	260.62
Fire	43.68	50.96	58.24	65.52	80.08	94.64	109.20	131.04
Parish	48.37	56.43	64.49	72.55	88.67	104.79	120.92	145.1
Total	1079.10	1258.95	1438.8	1618.65	1978.35	2338.05	2697.75	3237.30

For **Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)**

The outlook is bleak – no increase in their council tax element means the County needs to find savings of almost £46million and cuts to adult social care services will be severe.

The County had an option to raise a further 2% Council Tax for social care only, which would have produced an additional £4.8 million to use for Adult Social Care. But the Conservatives and UKIPs voted against it. This means that the very vulnerable will be hard hit as the County cuts its budget back radically.

Over the period of the Business Plan (to 2020) CCC will have to find a further £22.m of annual revenue savings. Or to put into context in a different way the Council would have to cut one in four members of the entire workforce, 640 social workers, the complete removal of the physical disability service or two thirds of the children's care service.

2. Housing – Social and Private Rented

Government has decreed that all councils with housing stock reduce rents by 1% each year for the next four years. This has thrown a spanner in the works for SCDC because its housing plans for the future was predicated on increasing rents to fund more house building.

In addition, the council is expected to sell off its most valuable properties as soon as they become void. Only 30% of the proceeds can be kept back to go toward building new council house stock. The rest goes to central government. Yet, the council is expected to build 2 houses for every 1 that it sells. The economics just does not add up.

Private landlords who help to alleviate the housing shortage are also under pressure as the Chancellor has decided to tax them on revenue and not profit (Clause 24 of the summer budget)—so the cost of mortgage borrowing which would have been deducted from rent, is now to be taxed as if it was income—with only a basic rate tax relief of 20%. Which means King Street Housing, who work with SCDC on this front, are now losing landlords with no prospect of signing up more. Private sector rents are also going up to make up for the increase in tax. All these measures have the makings of a rather large housing storm.

In light of the brewing housing storm, the SCDC budget now includes a sum of £250,000 set aside to provide accommodation and other assistance for those who may be made homeless and/or require assistance from the Council. Currently SCDC is only able to rehouse those with an A Banding (actually homeless or in immediate danger of becoming homeless)

During the debate at the Budget setting full council meeting last week, we urged the Administration to be proactive in preventing homelessness. I also urged them to have a word with their Westminster colleagues to explain to them the impact of the new policies on the Council budget, and to seek some relief or exemption.

I still urge those concerned about the cumulative impact of selling off council housing and not having enough money to build new ones and potential increase in private sector rents forcing more people into poverty to write to our MP, Heidi Allen at heidi.allen.mp@parliament.uk

Ermine Street (ES LTD)

This is the Council owned Private Housing Company that was set up to buy and build housing as a landlord in the private rented sector. The pilot project was successful and so the a further £120 million of capital has been made available to the company.

SCDC borrows at a favourable low rate, lends to ES at market rates. The rental income generated by ES pays the interest on the SCDC loan helping SCDC generate much needed income to plug the funding gap in grants it receives from central government.

3. Changes to Planning Scheme of Delegation

SCDC (South Cambridgeshire District Council) has made changes to how it considers planning applications and the role of Parish Councils in that process. It had an initial round of consultations back in autumn 2015, and received 27 responses. There was concern that the role of Parishes would be minimised by the proposals – mainly that Local Members only would be able to ask for an application to go to committee, and so the Portfolio Holder addressed that concern.

It is agreed that “All applications would be delegated (to Officers) other than application (i) where the Local Member or Parish Council requests for it to be considered by committee, giving sound planning reasons and the request is accepted by Chairman of the committee (ii) is made by an elected Member or Officer of the Council or a member of their household (iii) that would be a significant departure from the approved policies of the Council (iv) that is major or minor application for development on the Council’s own land and there are objections to it (v) for the demolition of a listed building or one with local interest and (vi) that by reason of special planning policy consideration, is complex or has significant/strategic importance to the area/parish.

If an application by the Parish is accepted, then it is important that someone from the Parish Council attend the planning meeting to support their comments!

4. Business Support Workshops

The Business workshops being run by SCDC and Huntingdonshire District Council through Nwes is still running, up to April 2016. It provides 28 free business skills workshops that could help businesses – and include business startup, planning, marketing, finance, customer acquisition and social media.

Nwes is a local enterprise agency established in 1982 and claims to be the UK’s largest not-for-profit Enterprise Agency working in partnership to provide total business support and encourage entrepreneurial skills in East of England.

Anyone interested can contact Nwes on 08456 099091, or email info@nwes.org.uk or visit the website at <http://www.nwes.org.uk/news/free-business-support-workshops-offered-in-huntingdonshire-and-south-cambridgeshire>

5. South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan Update

The Planning Portfolio Holder will be holding a meeting next week to approve the changes that are being proposed to the submission, these being the results from the consultation responses. This new revision will then be presented to full council on 24th March 2016, after which if approved by full council (more than likely due to the Tory majority), will be submitted to the Planning Inspector. Then we wait to see if the Inspector decides the information is sufficient to continue with the examination of the full plan.

6. Bourn Airfield – Wincanton Application for Storage

The application by the land owner and Wincanton to use one of the air strips at Bourn Airfield for storage of containers was given approval by the planning committee at its meeting on Wed 3rd February. Formal approval not yet issued as it is awaiting the final draft of the planning obligations regarding (1) the routing plan (to explain how lorries would access the A14 northbound and the M11 southbound without using local roads) and (2) setting up of a liaison group with local residents to speedily resolve any problems.

7. Development Proposal by Gladmans for 140 Houses in Caldecote

The application has been delayed and did not go to planning in March as originally expected.

However, there still remains the outstanding issue of the projection for school places – County council officers have indicated there is no need for extra spaces if the application is granted – on

the basis that the number of school children in the village will be declining. This was in response to a letter written to the County by the School Head Teacher expressing concern at lack of consultation with the school, and explaining numbers are increasing not decreasing.

But even more shocking is that the county will not object due to legal advice received not to object to proposed development on the basis that they cannot mitigate the impact of development. To do so would place the council at risk of challenge through a planning appeal process with a high risk of needing to meet developers cost. They have also identified a drop in number of school age children in a village with a growing population! Go figure!!

8. Community Awards Celebration

The sixth annual Community Awards celebration is taking place on Thursday 10 March 2016. The number of awards categories has been increased from five to six, in order to provide the best possible snapshot of local business and community activity, and to say thank you to the amazing individuals, groups and businesses that contribute massively to their communities.

There are some nominees from within the Ward, especially for the Village Hero award, and I wish every nominee the very best of luck and hope we have a winner to celebrate.

9. Casework/Councillor Drop-in surgery

Please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services (housing, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection etc).

Drop-in surgery normally takes place on the first Thursday of every month, 7pm – 8pm at the Caldecote Village Hall and first Monday of every month, 6pm – 7pm at the Toft People's Hall. However, if you need my assistance at any time in the interim, I am always available to you, so please contact me in one of the usual ways.

Tumi

Tumi Hawkins
08-March-2016

Email me @:	tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk
Follow on twitter:	http://twitter.com/CouncillorTumi
Facebook share:	http://www.facebook.com/itsCouncillorTumi
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Appendix B

Financial report 02 Mar 2016

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2015-16 £	Expenditure YTD £	Budget minus expenditure YTD £	
Grass and Hedge cutting	1902	1971	-69	£275.55 recd from CCC
Insurance	688	399	289	
Clerk's salary	1129	1181	-52	Dec PAYE not yet paid
Grants (section 137)	660	660	0	
Village Hall upgrade	1306	1157	149	
Audit fees	142	240	-98	
Village asset maintenance	450	278	172	
Subscriptions	169	224	-56	
Parish Magazine	470	470	0	
Footpath lighting	153	0	153	Inv now received £161
Miscellaneous and expenses	500	426	74	
Income other than precept	-136	-3614	3478	
Total	7432	3393		

Bank balances	Current account:	2595	
	Deposit account:	17860	