

Kingston Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held at 8.00pm on Tuesday 9 March 2021

This was a virtual meeting, held online using 'Zoom' for audio and video.

Present:

James Clear (JCI), Chair
Julie Conder (JCo)
Miki Ellar (ME)
Sue Dalgleish (SD)
Katherine Reid (KR)
Peter Stokes, Clerk
Tumi Hawkins, SCDC

Members of the public: Mimi Wheeler, Rachel Hooper (audio only), Chris Reid

1. Apologies

1.1. Lina Nieto, CCC

2. Minutes of last meetings

2.1. Parish Council meeting 12 January 2021 - accepted

2.2. Extraordinary meeting 24 February 2021 - accepted

3. Matters arising

3.1. 3.7 Change of charitable status of Kingston Village Hall Management Committee (KVHMC)

3.1.1. SD had circulated a document prior to the meeting to give the latest position to councillors on the proposal by KVHMC to change their status to that of Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

3.1.2. Chris Reid confirmed that two key changes that would be brought about by the proposed changes were that:

3.1.2.1. KVHMC members could not normally be held personally liable in the event of, for example, claim for injury or damage, or if they signed a contract on behalf of the Committee.

3.1.2.2. The village hall would no longer be owned by the Parish Council as Custodian Trustee, but would be wholly owned by KVHMC as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

3.1.3. Chris Reid then answered various questions from Councillors. It was agreed that KPC was happy in principle for KVHMC to proceed as proposed, but would like to see details of the change including costs as these become available before giving final consent.

Chris Reid then left the meeting.

3.2. 3.1 Emergency Plan: as agreed at the last meeting, and in view of recent correspondence from Crane's Lane residents regarding flooding, the Emergency Plan should include planning for a flood emergency. **Action: SD and JCo.**

3.3. 3.2 East West railway

- 3.3.1. It was confirmed that KPC supported the letter the Cambridge Approaches group proposed to send to the DoE and was happy to have its name added to the other signatories.
- 3.3.2. SD confirmed that there was no indication yet of the start of the consultation on the next stage of selecting the final alignment of the railway, promised for 'early 2021'. It was agreed that SD would contact EWR to chase progress. **Action: SD.**
- 3.4. 3.4 Kingston phone box – no further developments.
- 3.5. 3.5 Oak tree in the VH car park – lower branches have been removed.
- 3.6. 3.9 Two trees on Campbell-Orchard boundary – both have been felled.
- 3.7. 4.3.1 Installation of dog waste bins – residents living near the end of Field Road have confirmed that there has been an improvement in the dog waste problem, hopefully as a result of the signs put up by KR. KPC had previously agreed not to put up dog waste bins for the present, as there was a significant cost, and some residents were not happy with the proposal. It was agreed to continue to monitor the situation. **Action: all.**
- 3.8. 4.4 Footway lights in Crane's Lane – there had been complaints that the old lights were switched off and the new lights not switched on, but all three lights are now working.

4. Correspondence

- 4.1. Phone call from Crane's Lane resident re empty salt bin: bin has now been refilled. Crane's Lane residents have been requested not to use the CCC-provided salt for their private driveways.
- 4.2. Email from resident suggesting a map of the public footpaths and bridleways within the Parish is posted in a public place: agreed to research cost of providing a weatherproof Kingston-centred OS map in a public place, also publishing a similar map on the website in downloadable form.
- 4.3. Emails from residents re flooding and blocked ditches in Crane's Lane: agreed that recent heavy rain was exceptional, but that even in times of normal rainfall, gullies (roadside gratings) in the village sometimes do not cope with the flow of water. Some are blocked despite being reported to CCC. Agreed to remind residents on the south side of Crane's Lane of their responsibilities as riparian owners of the waterway adjacent to the lane.
- 4.4. Advice from CAPALC re face-to-face vs virtual council meetings: we are reminded that the current legislation under which parish councils can hold virtual meetings is for a temporary period which ends on 7 May 2021, and there has been no word about an extension. It was suggested that the next meeting, scheduled for 11 May, could be held one week early on 4 May, to bring it within the current legislation. Agreed to delay a decision on the format of the next meeting in the expectation that clarification will be issued in due course. It was noted that if the May meeting is to be held one week early as suggested, the decision will need to be taken by 28 or 29 April to allow time for the publication of a legal agenda at the latest on 30 April.

5. County Councillor's report

- 5.1. See Appendix A for Lina Nieto's February report.

6. District Councillors report

- 6.1. See Appendices B and C for Tumi Hawkins' February and March reports.

7. Open Spaces report

- 7.1. The Clerk reported that several trees in The Orchard are covered in ivy. JCI said that some of the fruit trees need pruning. Agreed to form a work party to deal with this in the Autumn.

8. Clerk's report

- 8.1. Bi-monthly report: previously circulated. See Appendix D.
- 8.2. Invoices for payment:
 - 8.2.1. Opus Energy footway lighting energy Jan 2021 £33.36: agreed for payment.
 - 8.2.2. Opus Energy footway lighting energy Feb 2021 £29.08: agreed for payment.
 - 8.2.3. Clerk's salary for Feb 2021 £131.86 (already paid) : agreed for payment.
 - 8.2.4. HMRC PAYE for Feb 2021 £32.80 (already paid) : agreed for payment.
 - 8.2.5. Clerk's salary for Mar 2021 £108.38: agreed for payment.
 - 8.2.6. HMRC PAYE for Mar 2021 £27.20: agreed for payment.
- 8.3. 2021 season grass and hedge cutting contract: confirmed agreement to accept offer of renewal from Buchan Landscapes at an increase of 1% increase on last year's price i.e. £2473.93 + VAT.
- 8.4. Appointment of new Parish Clerk
 - 8.4.1. Mimi Wheeler's children are now back at school so she is ready to start to take over as Parish Clerk. Agreed that the training/handover will re-start, and she and PS will meet during the week beginning 15 March to agree a changeover date.
 - 8.4.2. It was also agreed that both PS and Mimi Wheeler would be paid during the changeover period as both will be working for KPC. Mimi Wheeler's start date (and PS end date) will occur at some point during the changeover period. Whichever is Parish Clerk will receive the agreed salary for the post, the remuneration of the other person to be agreed.

9. Planning

- 9.1. None

10. Items for next meeting

- 10.1. None

11. Date for next meeting

- 11.1. 11 May 2021

The meeting ended at 21:10.

Signed:

Date:.....



Representing
*Barton, Caldecote, Coton, Comberton,
Harlton, Hardwick, Grantchester, Kingston,
Madingley, The Eversdens, & Toft.*

County Councillor Report- March 2021

Dear all,

As we continue through a very challenging time, I would like to remind you that you are not alone and that there is plenty of help and support out there. The Covid Hub remains active for anyone who needs help. 03450 455 219.

Census21 is here!

Census 2021 is coming, with Census day on Sunday 21 March. By taking part, you will help to inform future decisions on services that shape your community, such as healthcare, education and transport.

The census is a unique survey that happens every 10 years. It provides a snapshot of all the people and households in England and Wales – the most detailed information we have about our society.

<https://census.gov.uk/>

Laptops campaign reaches half a million pounds



A campaign to help disadvantaged children across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to get internet and laptop access is gathering pace, with the first batch of equipment being delivered to schools this week.

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council launched the 'Laptops for Children' campaign earlier this month in partnership with the Youth Panel, Cambridge Digital Direct, Cambridge 2030 and the Cambridge Culture Foundation, aimed at purchasing laptops and 4G routers for vulnerable young people.

Around 8,000 children in the region do not have use of a computer or broadband, meaning they

cannot access lessons and online resources, putting them at risk of falling behind with their studies.

Just over two weeks after launching the campaign, an impressive £567,845 has already been raised thanks to support from businesses and individuals, as well as funding from both authorities. A first batch of over 1,000 laptops and 460 routers have been purchased and will be distributed to schools from this week.

Girton interchange could be upgraded!

As many of you know the Girton interchange has been a key area of focus. In the past 4 years I have working with conservative colleagues locally, the Mayor and for the last year with Anthony Browne MP. I hope you have seen the article on the news, Anthony has succeeded in getting Highways to do another appraisal of the interchange. This is great news because we thought it would take longer for this to happen. This is one step forward...



Cllr Lina Nieto
Cambridgeshire County Council

Representing
*Barton, Caldecote, Coton, Comberton,
Harlton, Hardwick, Grantchester, Kingston,
Madingley, The Eversdens, & Toft.*

Local updates

Comberton: Planning Application CCC/20/076/Ful Comberton Village College for Proposed Ground Source Heat Pump System consisting of heat pumps and buffers/storage to be accommodated within a proposed energy centre, borehole array and connecting pipework.

Multiple roads being resurfaced in March.

Hardwick: Footpath improvement to start in March.

The Eversdens: Finch's Field, Little Eversden, carriageway surfacing works in March.

As always, here to serve you and help in any way I can.

Yours,

Lina Nieto

E-mail: lina.nieto@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Mobile: 07402 351821

Twitter and Facebook: [@CllrLinaNieto](#)

Councillor's Monthly Report – February 2021

This report of previous month events is for all the Ward, so please be aware that some of the content may not be relevant to your particular Parish.

General

Please contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. These are housing need, housing repairs for council tenants, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection, environmental health issues etc. Don't fight on your own. I am available to help you to get the best outcome possible for your situation.

If you have time to spare – check out articles on my blog <http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk>. What I post on there is my view and not LibDem or South Cambs official policy unless I state that it is.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

These are items in my previous reports that require action due to time limitations.

1. Green Homes Grant scheme

Government funding to make homes more energy efficient to help you saving money on household bills. **The scheme closes on 31 March 2021.** It could up to two thirds to full cost of improvements, from £5000 to £10,000 depending on your circumstances. Find out more if you are eligible at <https://greenhomesgrant.campaign.gov.uk/?> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-green-homes-grant-scheme>.

2. Broadband Voucher Scheme

Those that are suffering from low broadband speeds (less than 30 Mbps) can still take advantage of the Government's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme

<https://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/funding-schemes/rural-gigabit-voucher-scheme/>.

The Voucher is worth up to £3500 for small businesses and £1500 for residential premises. It remains **open till 31 March 2021** or until the funds run out. The funds can then be used to commission service from suppliers such a BT or others.

Also Connecting Cambridgeshire has secured £500,000 extra [“top-up” funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority](#) to provide an additional “top-up” of £1,500 per premise.

Check out my comments here <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/broadband-for-rural-communities/>

3. Business Grants for Lockdown

South Cambs continues deliver the Government grants available for local businesses. For this National Lockdown #3, which started on January 5, three new schemes are available.

The grants are (1) Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB), Closed Business Lockdown Payment (CBLP) and the Additional Restrictions Support Grant (ARSB).

Businesses can find information on how to apply, along with eligibility criteria, via the Council's website <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/businessgrant>

The Closing date for the new grant schemes is 31 March 2021 and final payments expected to be made by 30 April 2021.

4. Other Grants for Lockdown

The charity Cambridge Online is running a grant scheme on behalf of South Cambs to provide computer devices and data for those in need of it. Contact them by email using help@cambridgeonline.org.uk or call the Cambridge Online helpline on 01223 300407, quoting 'South Cambs Winter Support Grant'. Their website is at <http://cambridgeonline.org.uk/>

5. Wellbeing - Community Warden Scheme

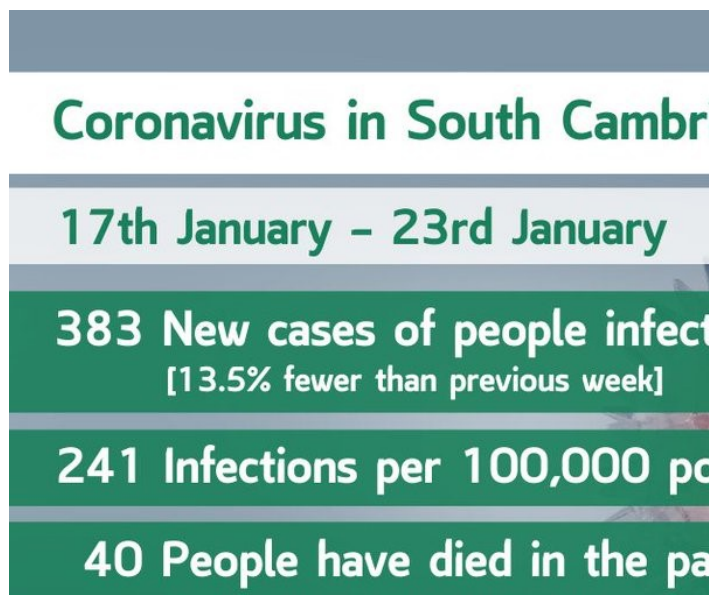
One of the new Community Warden Schemes (CWS) the Council launched recently (with an investment of £200,000) covers the villages of **Bourn, Caldecote** in the Ward. The scheme helps those above 60 to live independently, happily and safely in their own homes. Read more about it at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/seven-new-warden-schemes-launch-as-funding-for-2021-2024-announced/> If you are interested in the service, please call the new Community Warden Paula Rowley on **07812495997**.

COVID19 UPDATE

Good news: Vaccination program is making good progress and remains on track to offer Covid-19 vaccines to the most vulnerable patients by the middle of February. New instruction from NHS Cambridge and Peterborough CCG is that any patients who are clinically extremely vulnerable and have been shielding or who are aged 70 and above, and live in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough who **have not** had their first COVID-19 vaccination to now get in touch with their GP practice to book their vaccination appointment.

Patients may have also received a letter from the National Booking Service inviting them to attend one of the Mass Vaccination Centres. If so, patients can choose to book an appointment at one of these centres or contact their GP to book in at their local GP-led sites.

A Rapid Testing Centre opened on Wednesday 3rd February 2021 at The Hub, High Street, Cambourne, CB23 6GW, 8am-8pm, Mon-Sat. It is for key workers and people who are unable to work from home who are showing no symptoms to get tested if they are worried. All the more important as 1 in 3 people carrying the virus have no symptoms. You can book test at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/rapidtesting>



Bad news is that Lockdown 3 may not end till after Easter. A South African mutant strain has been found in parts of London, the South East, West Midlands, East of England and the North West. Enhanced testing is being deployed to these areas including door-to-door visits.

In the meantime, we must all continue to **stay at home** and observe lockdown guidelines found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home#summary-what-you-can-and-cannot-do-during-the-national-lockdown> .

Please make use of the various support groups that are available within your communities for shopping, collecting medicine, etc., and continue to Shop Local.

PLANNING and Housebuilding

Residents of South Cambs would have received a survey leaflet from Anthony Browne MP asking for views on the level of house building in the district. He is making claims based on his ignorance of how local plan making works in reality. He is asking the council to commit to a minimum number of houses based on a government algorithm only. It is contrary to his government's directive of that being a minimum and councils must take account of their local economies and needs.

The Council Leader, Cllr Bridget Smith wrote to Mr Browne back in July 2020 to try to explain to him how the local planning system works. Also to explain that we are simply not allowed to commit at this stage to greatly restricted housing numbers, especially as his own government has identified Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire for growth to drive the national economy. The OxCam arc project and East West Rail is evidence of this Government Plan. In addition, the Prime Minister Boris Johnson has adopted the "Build Build Build" mantra, and his government expects councils to build 300,000 houses per year in the country. The Conservative Mayor has also committed to doubling GVA and to building 100,000 new homes in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority area as part of the devolution deal that the Conservative Government imposed on us in 2016. The Mayoral authority was created to facilitate Infrastructure building, especially for transport, to make up for years of accumulated deficit. That has unfortunately not worked out so far.

The house building on major sites (greater than 10 houses) that is going on now is a result of the sites that the previous Conservative administration selected in 2012-2013 and put in the current local plan when they submitted it for inspection in 2014. It also includes sites that gained planning permission from 2016-2018 because the Council at the time did not have a 5-year housing land supply according to Conservative government set criteria. So it is rather brazen of the MP to try to blame major house building on the new Liberal Democrat administration – shows how much politics he is prepared to play! The survey is for his own political use only. We will not act illegally and pre-determine what that Local plan will be which is what Mr Browne is asking us to do.

Local Plan Update

In the first step to creating our new local plan, we had a call for sites in 2019 to ask for potential sites that could be made available. We also held a First Conversation in January 2020 to ask residents for their views on how the issues of today such as Climate change, Wellbeing, Biodiversity and Great places could influence the jobs of the future, where homes are built and what infrastructure is needed to make it all work. That was a first in the history of this council, as I previously reported. Read more on it at <https://greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/greater-cambridge-local-plan/first-conversation-consultation-and-call-for-sites/> We want to build homes we desperately need in the right places with the right infrastructure so residents can live healthily and happily.

We have also asked experts in their fields to gather and analyse evidence for us on these issues, and we published 17 interim reports in November 2020. This detailed evidence and more still to come will be the basis on which we make the decisions to create a plan that the Planning Inspectors will find sound. Please look at those documents at <https://greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/greater-cambridge-local-plan/document-library/>.

The council is now examining all the information to work out a draft spatial strategy and assessing the sites submitted to find out which might be selected. Thank you to the communities that have

responded to giving us additional local information on the submitted sites in their areas. We will be consulting for your views later this year after this work is done.

Water Study: We know there are issues with water provision in Greater Cambridge. South Cambs has been playing a very active part in the collective effort to help our chalk streams. We have been working with groups such as the Cam Valley Forum, the River Cam Conservancy and Water Resources East. As part of our work on the Local Plan, we recently published a ground-breaking Water Study that highlighted how unsustainable the current level of abstraction from the chalk aquifer is. We need significant investment in water infrastructure in order to provide long term solutions. You can find the report at <https://greatercambridgeplanning.org/media/1391/gclp-strategic-spatial-options-assessment-integrated-water-management-study-nov2020.pdf> . This is one of 18 reports of the evidence gathering projects that we initiated.

Doubling Nature Strategy, We have also recently published our new Doubling Nature strategy which sets out how we can enhance our natural assets, our approach to increasing wildlife-rich habitats, increasing tree canopies (we have the lowest in the country) and improving access to green spaces. The Council will work with communities and businesses as well as taking action on its own estate. You can find the Doubling nature report at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/council-lays-out-strategy-to-double-the-nature-on-its-doorstep-for-the-benefit-of-all/>

The Council will be marking Climate and Environment fortnight 2021 starting on Monday 22 February, with a series of free online webinars featuring guest speakers, activities and information to help people think about how to live more sustainably, reduce carbon emissions and in turn help tackle climate change. For example, the topic on Friday 26 February; is Greening your older home, tips and inspiration. Make plans to attend.

PAS Review report on Planning Committee

As part of the restructuring of the Shared Planning Service, PAS independent planning body carried out a review of the planning committee processes. We have published the report of that review on our website at <https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s120312/Appendix%20A%20-%20Peer%20Review%20Final%20Report%202020.pdf>

The report commended the council for getting the Planning committee to meet online very quickly after the pandemic hit. It praises the procedures and accessibility, acknowledging that access is relatively easy for those taking part live and via webcasting. It recognises the skills and experience being of the right balance, that councillors have a ‘good focus on public engagement’ and have ‘good accountability for their decisions’. It also found that the current process for deciding which planning applications go to planning committee is ‘a much more transparent model’ than the previous one which we inherited from the Conservatives. That process will be reviewed later this year, as suggested by the report. A Planning Development group of councillors and officers have formed to take forward the recommendations from that report on issues such as building trust between officers and councillors, improving committee reports, designing expert led training for members and parish councils.

Waterbeach New Town

The Planning Committee at its meeting of Friday 29th January 2021 granted Outline Planning Permission for up to 4,500 homes on the RLW Estates part of the site.

The development will also deliver a wide range of community facilities including a new secondary school, primary schools, community centres and playing fields. Parks, play areas, allotments and community orchards are also planned, along with natural wildlife habitats and sports pitches. A network of safe, direct walking and cycling routes will be provided from the start of the

development, linking homes with public transport and the town centre, schools, and employment areas as they are constructed.

The plans are associated with significant improvements to public transport, including a relocated, safer Waterbeach Railway Station. Proposals to move the station onto the site were approved by the District Council's Planning Committee in 2018. They will see a two-platform station with platforms long-enough for at least eight carriage trains, with the potential for expansion to accommodate 12 carriages in future. Access to the development will be via the A10.

FINANCE – Council Tax

The Cabinet approved the increase of £5 to £155.30 or 10p/week for a Band D property. This decision will go to full Council in February for approval.

LOCAL ISSUES

Drainage and Flooding

The last few weeks has seen a lot of rain and some local flooding. The Environment Agency say they are dealing with the third largest accumulative rainfall event from October – January since their records began in 1850. Similarly, Anglian Water declared that their resources are running at maximum capacity, with 11,000 calls to their helplines, brought in extra resources to keep systems going but still not responding as quickly as they normally would.

So we can all do our bit to help, it is important to understand which authority is responsible for how the water is dealt with. Below is a table showing the responsibilities and attached is a diagram showing the same.

Ground Water and Surface water caused by rain	Everywhere	Cambridgeshire County Council
Blocked or broken highway/road drain	Local Road	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Major road or Motorway	Highways England
Sewer	Anglian Water	Anglian Water
Drainage Ditch or River	Large river	Environmental Agency
	Small river or ditch	Internal Drainage Boards (IDB)
	Small river or ditch not in IDB	Cambridgeshire County Council, OR
	Small river or ditch not in IDB but awarded	District Councils (South Cambs or Cambs City)
	Small ditch or river through or adjacent to private/homeowners land	Riparian Owner

I would recommend that Parish Councils map out the watercourses in their parishes and identify ownership. Riparian owners more often than not do not know they own the watercourse and it may be necessary to write to them with a copy of the attached Riparian Owners leaflet.

Homeowners should make their own preparations to prevent flooding. Please check out more advice on our website at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-development/crime-anti-social-behaviour-and-community-safety/emergency-planning/flooding/>

Bourn Airfield New Village S/3440/18/OL

This application is going to be determined by the South Cambridgeshire District Council planning committee on Friday 19th February 2021.

Caldecote Liaison Group Meeting

This meeting took place on Wednesday 20th January 2021, attended by all parties except Linden Homes. Balfour Beatty got a good grilling as most of the issues raised had to do with their development. I am awaiting the meeting minutes being drawn up by the South Cambs community officer. Meantime, my notes are attached under separate cover

Casework

Irrespective of the current Covid19 lockdown, please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. I will help as best I can.

Please remember - The maxim **Hands – Face – Space** still very much the rule.

Tumi

Tumi Hawkins
3 February 2021

Email me @:	tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk
Read my blog at:	http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk
Twitter:	@CouncillorTumi
Facebook	@itsCouncillorTumi
LinkedIn	TumiHawkins
Call me on:	01954 210840/ 07802 323269

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Caldecote Ward

(comprises the Parishes of Caldecote, Childerley, Kingston, Bourn, Longstowe & Little Gransden)

Councillor's Monthly Report – March 2021

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Check out my comments here <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/broadband-for-rural-communities/>

3. Business Grants for Lockdown

Further news, on 22 February the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) updated the guidance on the Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB) which had closed and confirmed an extension until the end of March. The grant supports businesses that were required to close due to the current national lockdown#3. The Council will issue this as a **repeat payment to those in receipt of the LRSB closed scheme** as per BEIS guidance, rather than any new application process

Information on grants is at <https://www.scamb.gov.uk/businessgrant>. The Closing date is still 31 March 2021 and final payments expected to be made by 30 April 2021.

4. Other Grants for Lockdown

The charity Cambridge Online is running a grant scheme on behalf of South Cambs to provide computer devices and data for those in need of it. Contact them by email using help@cambridgeonline.org.uk or call the Cambridge Online helpline on 01223 300407, quoting 'South Cambs Winter Support Grant'. Their website is at <http://cambridgeonline.org.uk/>

COVID19 UPDATE

Good news: Government has announced and published a road map out of Lockdown#3. It outlines four steps with four tests to be carried out after each step is taken to ensure that it is safe to take the next step. I've put up a short-ish summary in my blog at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/roadmap-out-of-lockdown-3-depends-on-four-key-tests/>. The key dates are not set in stone. They are:

Step 1 – 8 and 29 March, Step 2 – not before 12 April, Step 3 – not before 17 May, Step 4 – not before 21 June. Whilst Step 1 is certain to start on 8 March, there is no guarantee the others will do so when indicated. So keep watching out for the news updates.

You will find full details at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary>

If you need a rapid test, then remember a Rapid Testing Centre opened on Wednesday 3rd February 2021 at The Hub, High Street, Cambourne, CB23 6GW, 8am-8pm, Mon-Sat. It is for key workers and people who are unable to work from home who are showing no symptoms to get tested if they are worried. You can book test at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/rapidtesting>

Businesses in South Cambridgeshire which have not yet benefitted from Government grants to help them through the Covid lockdowns are urged to get in touch with the District Council.

The District Council has now paid out **£7,347,509** in financial support to **3,257** businesses for the recent lockdowns running from November 2020 onwards, and it will be paying out further sums over coming weeks. To date, Government grants awarded by the Council from March last year is over £31million in 11 months.

Winter Support Payments

Small one-off grants to help South Cambridgeshire individuals and families in acute need as a direct result of Covid19 can now be made by some of our Council officers and other partner organisations across the county such as Citizens Advice and Age UK. These will be in the form of direct payments under the Winter Support Family Fund. A payment of up to £25 for an individual, and up to £50 payment for a couple or family is available to go towards food and fuel.

This is a countywide scheme that ends on 31 March 2021 which is when funding for Winter Support is expected to end. Residents can apply by email to duty.communities@scambs.gov.uk and an officer will be in touch with the resident to understand their situation, offer further advice, and make the award if needed. If you know of residents who may benefit from this small grant, please give them this information and help them with sending the email if needed or let me know.

Vaccinations

- A cumulative total doses of 215,034 have been administered in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (based on data up to 14 February 2021)
- More than 90% of residents aged 70 and above in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have received their first dose
- Anyone aged 65 and over, or Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (previously on the shielding list), who hasn't yet had their first dose should now make an appointment by phoning 119 or online at www.nhs.uk/covidvaccination
- Carers are included in cohort 6 for vaccination if they fit the definition of "adult carers", which is defined as "Those who are eligible for a carer's allowance, or those who are the sole or primary carer of an elderly or disabled person who is at increased risk of COVID-19 mortality and therefore clinically vulnerable."
- A list of adult carers is being compiled. When finished, those who are eligible will be contacted via the National Booking System (NBS) with an invitation to book vaccination through Vaccination Centres, Community Pharmacies or Hospital Hubs.

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- If an individual has been added to the Shielded Patient List as part of the new QCovid model, the NHS will contact them to offer the vaccine as soon as appointments become available. The NHS may contact patients via text message, letter or a phone call to offer an appointment.

In the meantime, we must all continue to **stay at home** and observe lockdown guidelines found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home#summary-what-you-can-and-cannot-do-during-the-national-lockdown> .

FINANCE –

The Medium Term Financial Strategy

The five year General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) delivers our Business Plan for South Cambridgeshire and its four principal objectives namely (i) Growing Local Businesses and Economies, (ii) Housing that is Affordable for Everyone to Live In, (iii) Being Green to Our Core and delivering (iv) A Modern and Caring Council. The MTFS is reviewed and refreshed every six months. At its February 2021 meeting the Full Council refreshed the MTFS to incorporate an updated financial forecast of the risks associated with Covid 19 and of the changes made and intending to be made by the Government in its financial support for local government, including the changes to the Public Works Loan Board rules.

In order to deliver the Business Plan and our statutory duties the Council must take a proactive approach to managing its resources effectively. Our four-year Service Transformation Programme introduced during 2019/20 together with our commercial investments are delivering savings and additional revenue and are at the centre of this. As a result of the MTFS refresh, despite the challenges we now face we forecast we will need to find £5 million in savings and additional income over the coming five years which is about the same as it was this time last year. We have a healthy General Reserve balance of around £16.5 million to deal with unforeseen problems.

We are still expecting the Government to carry out a major review of local government finance next year and we use our best guess of the worst-case scenario for us in our forward planning.

South Cambs District Council Budget for 2021/22

The SCDC budget for 2021/22 was debated and adopted at full council on 23 February 2021. Every year the council sets its budget, the funding plan for achieving its priorities and goals as set out in the corporate plan. The council is expected to generate whatever income it needs to meet its own projected expenditure from Council Tax and other sources such as the Retained Business Rates (RBR) - the proportion of the business rates collected that we retain, New Homes Bonus (NHB) for each new home that is built, Rural Services Grant and investments.

The council no longer receives The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) from Government (last one given in 2018). As a result, we drew up an Investment Strategy that is now used as a basis to determine what capital projects to invest in to obtain recurring income to be used for providing services to residents of the district.

The heart of the General Fund Revenue Budget is the Covid 19 business and social recovery in South Cambridgeshire and about continuing to give support to our residents and businesses to help them recover from the pandemic in the coming financial year. This budget also recognised the Government's local government financial settlement for the coming financial year - which the Local Government Association (LGA) explained is dependent on councils increasing council tax bills.

The net expenditure for 2021/22 to be met from the Government Grants, Business Rates and Local Taxpayers as above is estimated at nearly £21.7 million pounds. Council Tax payers are being asked to pay an extra 10 pence a week for the average Band D property, bringing South Cambs

council tax bill to £155.31p. (Less for lower bands and higher for higher bands). Not applying this small increase would require us to use money from reserves, which could be building up trouble for the future. Nevertheless the Council Tax bill from South Cambridgeshire District Council will continue to be in the lowest 25 per cent of all district council taxes. The Council operates a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for those on low incomes as well as having discretionary powers to help council taxpayers as we have done during the past year.

The tables in Appendix A give the figures of the precepts for all the parishes in Caldecote Ward for the 2021/22 municipal year. The table below shows the proportion of each of the components of the council tax and the difference from the 2020/21 precepts (example below is for Caldecote).

	£ Band D		£ difference
Cambridgeshire County Council	1399.77	70.6%	£40.59
Police & Crime Commissioner	247.59	12.5%	£14.94
South Cambs District Council	155.31	7.8%	£5.00
Cambridgeshire Fire Service	73.53	3.7%	£1.44
Parish Council (Caldecote)	106.18	5.4%	£1.65
Total	1982.38		

The SCDC precept is only 7.8% of the council tax residents will pay. The lion share of 70.6% is required by the Cambridgeshire County Council. SCDC collects all these precepts on behalf of the precepting authorities and passes it on to them.

There has been a hit on Business Rate income and there are concerns that the long term effects of Covid 19 in terms of business failures and property devaluation may impact on the Business Rate growth in this coming financial year. Against this background of less income from Business Rates and grants, the council is not just relying on more money from council tax payers.

Service Transformation

We have embarked on an ambitious 4 year plan to transform council service quality, better realign our financial resources to business plan priorities and improve customer service. This will achieve a reduction in net expenditure compared to 2020/21 of over £2.1 million. Helping our communities and businesses fight back in these difficult circumstances is essential. Therefore some of the savings achieved have gone to pay for additional support. For Covid 19 we have set aside a revenue contingency of £250,000 and there is a two-year post for a Welfare and Visiting Advisor to support and enhance the work of the Housing Benefits team during this difficult time for our residents. There is more funding for homelessness at this time of economic hardship and for land drainage when we are seeing record breaking rainfall due to climate change.

We also have staffing support to maximise our investment opportunities, which is key to retain our financial resilience to deliver place making and income. South Cambridgeshire District Council with a General Fund reserve of £16.5 million is in a sound financial position and this budget gives us the financial stability to proceed into the next council year and beyond.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The Housing Revenue Account budget is focused on delivering more council housing and improving the service to Council tenants. The HRA budget continues to be set in the context of a 30- year business plan. The HRA cannot be subsidised by local tax and it has to support a housing debt of £205m pounds taken out by the previous Conservative administration to “buy out” and retain our council rents from the Government.

With respect to the council house building programme we have external funding from Section 106 commuted sums, retained right to buy receipts. The way the Council uses these funds is set out in the Housing Capital Investment Plan.

Since April 2018 we have completed 105 rented and shared ownership properties and have 248 in the pipeline. We have also sold off 8 plots for self-build, generating income for the HRA. We estimate the HRA balance at the end of this financial year will be just over £2.5 million which is adequate for HRA purposes. To ensure it does not fall much below that figure and to maintain our drive to improve the customer service to our tenants and grow our social housing stock, there is no alternative to increasing council rent levels.

Rents will increase by 1.5 per cent in line with Government policy and this means that the average social rent will increase to £106.02 per week. And in line with rent legislation our affordable rents will continue to be no more than 80% of the market rent. The average affordable rent is currently £148.18.

We are acutely aware that some of our tenants are having financial problems and offer assistance and advice as appropriate. The HRA budget also includes support for tenants some of whom are receiving Universal Credit.

PLANNING

Further to my report last month, I am pleased to report that our MP, Mr Anthony Browne has taken up the invitation to a briefing with Senior Planning Officers to find out the process for creating Local Plans and the requirements that the Government of which he is a part, is placing on all Local Authorities. This briefing took place last week, together with the South East Cambs MP, Lucy Fraser. I can only hope that we will now see a more constructive engagement with the District Council on planning matters.

Bourn Airfield New Village S/3440/18/OL

This outline application was approved by the South Cambridgeshire District Council planning committee on Friday 19th February 2021. There will be further planning stages called “reserved matters applications” where the detailed planning phases will be submitted for approval. So residents will still have opportunities to comment as the site gets built out.

Bourn Parish Council and Caldecote Parish Council sent representatives to speak on their behalf. On this occasion, I spoke only as the District Councillor. I had stepped down from the Planning Committee itself to avoid opening up the Council to legal challenge. I had to do this because of the “conflict of interest” that Countryside Properties levelled at me and their complaint to the new LibDem administration when I became the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning in May 2018. This was due to my supporting Caldecote PC and residents, and StopBAD in opposing the site when it was selected by the previous Conservative administration to be in the Local Plan submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in March 2014 and found sound in August 2018. I have previously written about this and you can find it on my blog at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/countryside-properties-gag-attempts-on-bourn-airfield-development/>.

The debate was exhaustive and the vote was close, 6 in favour and 5 against. The sticking point, as expected was the issue of the Cambourne to Cambridge (C2C) Busway, which underpins the delivery of the site and is the only transport solution that the Cambridgeshire County Council proposed for it back in 2013. Again, I have written about this before and you can find it at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/new-transport-strategy-for-cambridge-and-south-cambridgeshire/>

The battle for inclusion in the local plan was lost in August 2018 when the Planning Inspectors announced the plan was sound. That sealed its fate for being built on and nothing would change that. The question then was whether the outline proposals that Countryside had submitted would provide sufficient mitigation against the planning harm that building out the site would cause. This is the planning balance that the committee had to strike. I prepared a statement for the committee and you will find the full text on my blog at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/bourn-airfield-outline-planning-application-going-to-committee/> and you can read what happened at committee at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/bourn-airfield-gains-outline-planning-approval-at-committee/>

In the end, Condition 13.(ii) was removed, which means no more than 500 houses will be built until there is visible progress on the delivery of the C2C busway. As I said to the committee, we inherited a lemon, but we can try and make the best lemonade possible with it.

Transport

Cambourne to Cambridge busway – The GCP schedule initially set 2024 as the completion date for the C2C, until the intervention of the Conservative Mayor James Palmer threw a spanner in the works. The GCP has now agreed to and appointed auditor to undertake an Independent Audit Review of the scheme, and to report to the Board in July 2021. Depending on the outcome the proposed delivery date could still be 2024 or it could push out to 2026.

Girton Interchange – There is some propaganda going round that this may be upgraded thanks to campaigning by some recently appointed people. Considering that many others including former MPs, councillors including me ([see my 2013 blog article on it](#)), Council leaders, [Smarter Cambridge Transport](#), A428/A421 alliance (I was a member), C2C Local Liaison Forum, The Coalition of Parish Councils, and many more had been campaigning before then seems to have been forgotten. In fact we raised the profile so much, in its application for the Development Consent Order (DCO), Highways England presented a plan showing how the interchange could be laid out to accommodate the extra flows (Document [HE/A14/EX/32, Question 1.59 on page 21 and Figure 1.3 on page 22](#)). We had been informed in 2017 at the end of the A428/421 alliance project that funding for it would need to be considered in the next but one of the Highways England 5-year rolling programs – which so happens to be the 2025-30 period. I am glad to hear it is being looked at for that period, but as we know, it is not guaranteed for an upgrade until the funds are allocated! Fingers crossed.

Casework

Irrespective of the current Covid19 lockdown, please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. I will help as best I can.

Please remember - The maxim **Hands – Face – Space** still very much the rule. Stay safe.

Tumi

Tumi Hawkins
3 March 2021

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Appendix D

Financial report 04 Mar 2021

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2020/21 £	Expenditure YTD £	Budget minus expenditure YTD £	
Grass and Hedge cutting	2167	2174	-7	
Insurance	375	373	2	
Clerk's salary	1278	1251	27	
Grants (section 137)	981	670	311	
Village Hall upgrade	1288	1288	0	
Audit fees	100	53	47	
Village asset maintenance	900	1079	-179	
Subscriptions	368	156	212	
Parish Magazine	760	559	201	
Footpath lighting	300	301	-1	
Miscellaneous and expenses	1500	567	933	
Income other than precept	-150	-384	234	
Total	9866	8087		

Bank balances	Current account:	3592
	Deposit account:	14011
S106 money (included in above)	'Open space'	0
	'Community facility'	945