

# DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

JUNE 2018

CLLR SARAH CHEUNG JOHNSON & CLLR ALEX MALYON

## DISTRICT COUNCIL AGM 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY

South Cambs District Council (SCDC) met for its Annual General Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> May with Cllr Bridget Smith officially taking over as leader of the new Liberal Democrat controlled council. Cllr Douglas De Lacey, an Independent, was elected as Chairman and Cllr Anna Bradnam as Vice Chairman.

Committee positions were also confirmed at this meeting. Sarah has secured positions on the Employment and Staffing Committee, Scrutiny and Overview Committee and as a substitute member of the Cambridge Fringe JDCC. I am a substitute member for the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and for the Cambridgeshire County Council Health Committee.

The formation of two new Committees was announced, a Climate and Environment Advisory Committee and a Grants Advisory Committee.

A full list of Cabinet and Committee appointments can be found here:

<http://scams.moderngov.co.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>

New Council Leader Bridget Smith gave a speech at the AGM outlining the three day-one priorities for the new council:

- affordable homes;
- putting the environment first in everything we do;
- actively supporting business growth - this will include the establishment of a Brexit Working Group to coordinate efforts to support local businesses with challenges they will face as we leave the EU.

The full transcript of the speech can be accessed here:

<https://cllrdavidjenkinscom.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/leader-speech-as-delivered.pdf>

## 5 YEAR LAND SUPPLY

On 21<sup>st</sup> May the SCDC confirmed that it considers it can meet Government requirements for the provision of new housing land. As a result of an updated assessment of where homes are expected to be built over the next five years it was confirmed that there is enough suitable land readily available to meet the target for the number of homes that need to be built.

Planning applications will now be assessed against all the Council's local policies as well as those set nationally. This will hopefully mean that assessment of planning applications will no longer be tilted towards the requirement for delivery of new housing. This should give South Cambridgeshire villages greater protection from the kind of speculative development that we have seen in recent years.

#### COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEMES SUSPENSION

The suspension of the Community Chest and Community Energy grant schemes was announced last week, pending a review by the newly formed Grants Advisory Committee. This review is to ensure that grants are meeting the needs of residents and targeting the groups that are most in need of help. Grant applications will re-open following the review and we will keep you updated on this. All grant applications received prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> May will be assessed based on the existing criteria.

#### LOCAL HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

This is the main opportunity of the year to bid into the County Council Highways department to make local improvements to the roads and footpaths. These have included over the years, speed reductions, new pavements and zebra crossing installations. This is a well-used and very popular scheme that attracts bids from most of the parishes in Cambridgeshire. Schemes are worked up with a Highways engineer and applications are limited to one per parish. The closing date for applications is Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> July. You can download the forms here:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/improving-your-local-highway/local-highway-improvement-funding/>

#### NORTHSTOWE COMMUNITY FORUM

The Northstowe Community forum on May 16<sup>th</sup> was very well attended and provided an excellent opportunity for residents to hear from SCDC and the developers and for residents to give their views. We have provided the notes which Sarah and I made at the meeting and copies of presentations to the parish clerks, if these are of interest.

#### KINGFISHER POND UPDATE

An update on the Kingfisher Pond and groundwater issues locally was provided by Gallagher's at the Northstowe Community Forum. They stated that ground water levels are returning to normal.

The Kingfisher Pond is fed by surface run-off which has not been going into the pond. They expect that once groundwater levels are back up and surface water is replaced the pond will revert to normal.

In future the plan is that surface run off from the sport pitches will be used to feed the pond. However, as an interim measure it has been proposed that water from dewatering works on the adjacent Barratts Homes site will be used to refill the pond. As advised by the SCDC ecologist this water will be tested for contamination prior to filling of the pond.

The SCDC ecologist has also advised that scrub vegetation will need to be cleared from the site before refilling can begin. A meeting has been organised for Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> June for those interested in volunteering to be involved with this.

There has been some continued concern about a well in Longstanton that has a reduced water level. SCDC intended to hire an independent consultant to investigate this issue. We do not have a concrete timeline for this but we will provide updates when available.

Finally, in a meeting prior to the Forum, Homes England confirmed that monitoring bore holes will be put in around the Phase 2 site and that the attenuation ponds and drainage pipes will lined as a precaution.

#### NORTHSTOWE ALLOTMENTS & ORCHARD FOR PHASE 1.

South Cambs District Council (SCDC) have brought in landscape architect Emily Haysom to design and work with residents on the Allotments and Orchard for Phase 1. The working group will make decisions such as: how the allotment will be run, whether to add animal husbandry, beehives to the area, whether to have all 5 pole allotments (half size) or mix them with 2.5 pole (quarter size) allotments, tree planting etc.

As a reminder the allotments are for Phase 1 residents but because we are unlikely to have enough occupants for allotments in the beginning, these allotments will be made available to local, non-Northstowe applicants. Demand from Phase 1 residents take priority.

Residents who are interested in being involved in the working group or who would like to register interest in an allotment can contact: [Northstowe.community@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:Northstowe.community@scambs.gov.uk)

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about these, or any other matters.

Alex Malyon and Sarah Cheung Johnson

District Councillors for Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe

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