

## **Report for West Wickham Parish Council Meeting** **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

### **Local Plan- update**

The work is progressing well in the areas Need for housing, Green Belt, Transport Modelling, Sustainability Appraisal, Infrastructure and Viability however, the work is taking longer than expected. The slower pace of work is not however considered to impact the overall timetable. The new timetable is as follows;

- November; Council meetings to consider further work and any proposed modifications.
- 3 weeks in December 2015 (2/12 - 23/12) and 3 weeks in January 2016 (4/1 - 25/; Joint public consultation
- March 2016; Consider public consultation responses and submission of further work and associated modifications to Inspectors for consideration.

As mentioned previously, householders can continue with applications for buildings and alterations that will be judged using the Local Development Framework (LDF) and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Further details can be found on the South Cambs District Council website. Parish councils are also kept informed by email with a Planning Policy Monthly Update.

### **Neighbourhood Plan - Update**

There is a consultation process for three plans including West Wickham. The period of consultation finishes 30<sup>th</sup> October. The key officer, Alison Talkington will report to the Portfolio Holders Meeting in December. At this meeting, strategic policies will be identified that may progress faster than the Local Plan examination

### **Boundary Review**

A Boundary Review had been initiated by the **Local Government Boundary Commission for England** since there has been unequal growth in parts of the District meaning that some SCDC councillors were now representing more electors than others. Specifically, the Histon and Impington Ward had grown to be 30% bigger than the average Ward.

At a Full Council meeting held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September, a decision was made to recommend what we believe to be the maximum number of councillors, of 45, down from the current 57 councillors. Also, at a later Special Council meeting, the decision was made to elect district councillors in all-out elections every four years allowing for Wards to be represented by 1, 2 or 3 members better reflecting the rural nature of the district.

The process of reviewing the Ward boundaries, is scheduled to start in November 2015, with final recommendations being published in August 2016. It is understood that the new Wards would be implemented and ready for all out elections in May 2018.

The final decision, even after SCDC's recommendations, is made by the Boundary Commission.

It was also decided that Parish Councils would have their elections at the same time as those held for district councillors thus saving the election expenses.

### **Refugee Crisis**

There was a e-petition to the Council to

- state its willingness to accommodate a proportionate number of refugees;
- approach relevant government departments and other local authorities to develop a coordinated scheme for accommodating refugees and
- urge the government to participate in EU-wide approaches to helping refugees.

The members at Full Council decided to note the petition. This decision allowed for time and for more information from central government.

It was noted that the UK government is the second largest bilateral donor to the Syria crisis with [a further £100 million pledged on 4 September](#), taking the total contribution to over £1 billion since 2012 to help vulnerable people in Syria and refugees in the region.

The UK had already accepted 216 people since January 2014, as part of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons scheme and, since 2011, has granted humanitarian protection to almost 5,000 Syrians through our normal asylum procedures.

### **The Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership (SPEP)**

After a period of public consultation, the work shall continue to support the sustainable parish energy partnership so as to empower communities to run their own energy saving initiatives. It is free to be a member of the SPEP.

#### What are the benefits of joining SPEP?

As a member of SPEP, you will be invited to workshops and visits to develop your knowledge of sustainability. You will be on the mailing list for news of local sustainability initiatives, and updates on grants, subsidies and other opportunities. You will also be encouraged to run local projects, and have access to support for these, for example:

**Thermal Imaging** - loan of a thermal imaging camera and free training to do home surveys

**Electricity monitors** - a supply of these to lend out to households

**Energy Saving Light Bulb Library** - borrow this to encourage householders to upgrade their lighting

**Village events** - help to plan, organise, promote and run events to encourage various aspects of sustainable living

### **Financial Management System**

The current system requires updating. At the Full Council meeting, the members approved the budget of £190,000 for the upgrades.

## **Age-UK Cambridgeshire**

### Small Villages Warden Service

I attended a meeting with Melanie Murdoch Age UK Cambridgeshire – Home Services Manager, Sue Buckingham Age UK Cambridgeshire – Community Warden and Sisse McCall from West Wrating, Nicky Cornish from West Wickham and Rita Lemon from Shudy Camps on 16<sup>th</sup> September. The meeting reinforced how useful the service was and how local members of the parishes benefited from the contact and support that the warden service provided.

The group wished again to thank the parish councils for their support which is highly significant, almost matching the contributions made by Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambs District Council.

A printed Programme of events and activities in and around October that celebrates the International Day of Older People was provided. Notably, on the 10<sup>th</sup> October, the Chestnut Tree was providing discounts on lunch or dinner on production of the Programme