

Annual Parish Councillor's Report for the Balsham Ward

Local Plan

After a period of consultation, and approval at the last full Council Meeting, the consultation report and Proposed Modifications to the Local Plan document were submitted on 31 March 2016 along with those from Cambridge City Council.

Upon receiving these documents, the Inspectors provided an updated Hearing Programme with Hearings starting on 7 June 2016 with joint hearings relating to three aspects of the Proposed Local Plan Modifications.

The three aspects are;

1. Housing need (namely does the 33,500 houses [satisfy housing requirement](#) and how does this figure relate to the additional 1000 homes associated with the City Deal)
2. 5 year housing land supply (can we use both Council's figures and can we use the figures to project future land supply?)
3. Green Belt Review methodology (checking how existing Green Belt land performs against the purpose for why it was including it as Green Belt. No specific sites looked at)

Further information can be found by visiting the Local Plan webpages

Planning Scheme of Delegation

At the March Planning Committee meeting, the Committee approved

1. that the automatic referral to Planning Committee is removed when an officer recommendation of approval conflicts with representations by the Parish Council where these cannot be substantially addressed by planning considerations.

Instead this process is being replaced by the **right** of the Parish Council to request an application to be considered by Planning Committee. The request must be supported by material planning reasons and the final decision on whether the application is considered by Planning

Committee will be taken by the Chairman of Planning Committee in consultation with the Designated Officer (Head of Development Management or Head of New Communities)

2. approved that the time given for District Councillors to request an application be considered by Planning Committee is extended from 21 to 28 days; and

3. allowed all decisions to be delegated with few exceptions

2. **requested** that the effectiveness of the revised Scheme be assessed after about a year, and a formal review process involving Parish Councils should take place within 24 months of the date of this resolution.

Boundary Commission

There was a consultation period that ended 1st February where 16 parish councils (none from the Balsham Ward) and 13 SCDC local residents responded along with single submissions from a district councillor (Nigel Cathcart), a society (Whittlesford Society) and South Cambs District Council.

Since then, the Commission has agreed to the number of councillors being reduced from 57 members to 45.

It has also considered the submissions so as to produce a set of draft recommendations for new wards (Cambourne??) and ward boundaries across the local authority area. The draft recommendations are to be published tomorrow (10th May). These recommendations are then available for everyone to respond to. The consultation stage of the draft recommendations, runs between 10th May until 4th July with the final recommendations being published on 6th September.

“Have your say on new ward boundaries for South Cambridgeshire”

Use “The Local Government Boundary Commission” web page
<https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6215>

Finances

At the Feb Full council meeting the budget was passed to increase the district contribution by £5 over the year. SCDC is currently one of the

lowest charging councils in the UK and even with a £5 per year increase, SCDC will be in a group that is in the lowest quartile of councils. SCDC is looking at raising funds and looking for efficiencies rather than reducing services which is good for local residents. One initiative is Ermine Street Housing that offers the opportunity to realise interest receipts thus contributing to Council revenue funding.

s106 Agreements - Spending Plan

Currently, most s106 agreements have a clause allowing the receiving parish councils a 10 year period in which to spend.

However, at a recent presentation to the planning committee, an example of a development in Bedfordshire was given where a developer was let off the s106 payment of a primary school contribution mainly on the grounds that (a) *there no longer appeared* to be a justification for the contribution and (b) the local education authority (who received the s106 monies) had not spent the it.

Therefore the advice is, that Parish Councils look at a period of 5 rather than 10 years in terms of spending/allocating s106 monies. I need to mention the fact that the 5 years (as per Section 106 A) *starts from the date of the agreement* whereas it may be a couple of years later that the PC receives the money.

In terms of South Cambs adoption of a CIL charge (Community Infrastructure Levy - that is to replace s106) it has been decided not to progress the adoption until the Local Plan has been found sound therefore on this basis it is not likely to happen before late 2017 at the earliest.

Greater Cambridge City Deal

A1307 HAVERHILL TO CAMBRIDGE

Discussions and meetings are held jointly between Cambridge City Council and South Cambs District Council

At the last City Deal Executive Board meeting held on 3rd March, Cllr Francis Burkitt appointed as was ELECTED as Vice-Chairman of the Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board.

The Executive Board:

DISCOUNTED from further consideration as part of the Greater Cambridge City Deal **1. reopening the railway to Haverhill** and **2. providing a Busway all the way to Haverhill**

It **AGREED** to commission, with partners, further traffic counts and modelling assessments of the case for improvements to the A1307 all the way to Haverhill.

This means that money is available to conduct traffic surveys for 12 months on the A1307 but also on roads known to be used as rat-runs. This should be starting any time soon.

And

APPROVED for public consultation, illustrative concepts to provide improved Park and Ride linked to Bus Rapid Transit between Fourwentways and Cambridge, and Cycling and Walking measures along the (Cambridge - Haverhill?!) corridor.

Next meeting of the board is 16th June 2016

A **“A1307 Parishes Forum”** has recently been formed. In a letter agreed by Bartlow Parish Meeting and Balsham, Great Abington, Hadstock, Hildersham, Horseheath, Linton, Little Abington and West Wickham Parish Councils, Stuart Miller asked on behalf of the Forum, local representatives including District Councillors for greater communication, oversight and realism in the preparation of Local Plans so that the concerns of villages would be considered at the same time and along with the development aims of neighbouring districts.

The Greater Cambridge City Deal has made money available for data gathering for 12 months with the hope to obtain greater quality information than the data gathered previously. The data gathering is by using road strips and cameras for automatic vehicle registration plate recognition and will cover main routes as well as known “rat runs” in our villages.

Shared Services

Because of closer working relationships a number of ‘shared service’ arrangements have been entered into. A good example is the Waste and Recycling service, which is being shared with Cambridge City Council. This has resulted in £600,000 of savings so far, with the aim to make a further £150,000 of savings over the next 2 or 3 years.

Other services already being shared are the Home Improvement Agency, Payroll, Building Control, Legal Services, and shortly ICT. These are being shared with a combination of Cambridge City Council and Hunts District Council.

Discussions are underway with two big services; Finance and Planning. Progress so far, with finance, Caroline Ryba has been appointed as the new shared Head of Finance (Cambridge City and SCDC), and for planning, Stephen Kelly has been appointed DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT starting in June.

Community chest

The hugely successful Community chest scheme has now been replenished with £56,000 of funding, for 2016/17 and is open for applications again.

No doubt, word is out about how quick and simple it is to win a grant, and so I would encourage any community groups or Parish councils to make their applications quickly in case the pot runs dry again.

Awards are given on a first come first served basis, and when the budget is spent, then that's it until next year.

May 2015

Castle Camps Playground	Castle Camps Shudy Camps	Purchase and install new play equipment	45,000	1,500	1,500
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June 2015

Meadows Out of School Club	Balsham, West Wickham, WestWratting, Weston Colville	To purchase outdoor play equipment	473.51	473.51	473.51
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Devolution

In brief. There is no “done deal”. Discussions are continuing with most progress being made between the County of Cambridgeshire together with the Unitary authority of Peterborough. The government wishes to progress an Eastern powerhouse and has made £170 million available for housing where, possibly, £100 million will be available to SCDC. However the government also wishes for there to be an elected Mayor.

The initial deal leaves a lot to yet to be negotiated and ironed out, and South Cambs have **signed up** to commit us to debating the offer at a special Full council meeting scheduled for the end of June, where we will decide if we are going to take this forward or not.