

Draft until signed
Minutes of Dry Drayton Parish Council (DDPC) Meeting
Tuesday 8th September 2020 at 7.30pm, via virtual Zoom meeting online

Present: S Lander (SL) (Chair), J Dolan (JD) (Vice-Chair), E Pyle (EP) (Councillor), T Houlihane (TSH) (Councillor), K Cullen (KC) (Councillor), F Peck (FP) (Councillor)

Attending: S Etherington-Meech (SEM) (Clerk/RFO), Cllr L Harford (LH) (County Councillor), Cllr D Delacey (DDL) (District Councillor), 26 members of the public

1. To Accept Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

2. To Accept Parish Councillors Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda

FP declared a pecuniary interest in Item 8.a) i) & ii) – Planning Applications for consideration - The Irwin Centre & Scotland Farm (these are a business interest and residence of FP and her spouse). SL also advised that FP would have a pecuniary interest in Item 10. b) due to current negotiations with her spouse in relation to the NMU/cycle path project.

3. Presentation by Andrew Hodgson, Senior Director, Pegasus Group regarding potential development of housing and village amenity

SL introduced Andrew Hodgson (AH) and welcomed him to speak.

AH explained that the Pegasus Group (PG) have been instructed by a landowner in Dry Drayton (DD) regarding a parcel of land in the middle of the village, adjoining the back of the primary school, fronting on to Par Street. He shared a plan on the screen for all participants of the meeting to see and advised that all residents of the parish should be receiving a letter the following week regarding a public consultation giving them an opportunity to comment. AH advised that he believes that the consultation will be open for a 2-3-week period although they are nowhere near submitting a planning application at present.

Around 18 months ago South Cambs District Council (SCDC) incorporated a call for sites within their local plan and the Scambler Trust asked PG to consider their site with an opportunity for a community led scheme. The site was identified as a good opportunity to provide a scheme with some benefits for the community. Key benefits identified as providing a village green with a children's play area within a central location (as currently the only green space available to the village is sharing school facilities at weekends), half a hectare of the new play area, which has been sought by the parish for many years, will be gifted to DDPC. It will include natural water features such as small ponds and through close links to the school will provide a parking area for the school to assist current congestion. The school will be able to use the green area and there will be a link from the proposed area to school so that children could walk through to the front and there is potential for an area for extra classrooms in the future.

AH also explained that housing is placed at the top of the site because of drainage considerations, to pull back development from neighbouring properties, to keep away from a nearby listed property, to give views over the village green and to make arrival to the site pleasant.

AH explained the housing element of the scheme has been driven by the need for family housing in the village including that Dry Drayton Primary School has a low roll and it is felt that a scheme with family housing could help the school. The plan that AH was presenting currently shows 29 units and PG will carry out a pre-application with SCDC, however, he stated that PG would fix the amount of units to maximise family and affordable housing to ensure that developers would not subsequently be able to reduce the amount of units and for example build 12 large market houses. AH advised that by obtaining outline planning with the master plan conditions will be included as a legal requirement for the market such as a legal agreement that the village green must be gifted to the parish council and all benefits must be included as part of the scheme and no planning permission will be forthcoming if not achieved. AH explained that the 29 family houses would be a mix of 2, 3- and 4-bedroom homes including affordable housing in order to attract younger families to help the school and for people to move within the parish.

AH stated that the site itself is in the Green Belt so the benefits of the scheme are required to demonstrate why they want to be building in Green Belt and reasoning includes that it is well enclosed site that sits well in village and is the only real site in the parish which would be able to provide the benefits for the school and green space in a central location, however, PG will do an analysis of all sites but do feel that it is the best can be offered. AH advised that within the plan the public footpath, tree belt and public right of way are retained, and the aim is to include benefits such as cycle parking.

LH thanked AH for his comprehensive presentation and asked AH if the site went through the call for site sift, how they were going to prioritise the benefits they are offering and that there may be a suggestion of over provision in the scheme. AH explained that PG are not looking to buy the development but to maximise the benefits of the development and to ensure that when it goes to a market house builder it is a benefit lead scheme. It is intended that all benefits are put into legal agreements ready for a committee meeting with SCDC, so they are deliverable, and all benefits are delivered as part of the housing scheme. AH explained that the key thing is that housing is justified in relation to mix/scale etc and that the scheme is exactly what the village needs and not inappropriate and that that want to keep control of that.

LH advised that she believes that the benefits should be and can be realised and is delighted that these are being considered, however, if S.106 agreement is entered with SCDC the S.106 officer may state that something is generous and cannot meet tests. AH advised that all benefits have been generated from people within the parish and they have started with the benefits and provided housing with it. LH highlighted that S.106 could not accommodate gifting of land to the school so asked AH if a separate legal agreement would be entered into to secure that. AH advised that if the school were happy to accept what was being offered liaison with the education department would take place and PG would like to see the benefits before the housing.

Queries raised by residents were as follows:

- A current right of way in the parish that goes through the scheme is not shown on the plan, AH requested that if the resident contacts SL with information he will liaise with SL and investigate this matter.
- Concern over high speed traffic coming through the village, AH confirmed that they are aware that this is an issue and that they have Canon Highways Consultants on board for this, the resident also requested that DDPC consider spending S.106 monies on traffic calming for the parish.
- Whether a hard limit could be put in place for the number of houses allowed through the scheme, AH advised that they could not really go above 29 units and would not want to compromise the open space and once a figure of units is agreed they would stick to it, a maximum and minimum would be imposed as this scheme is to generate family and not executive homes in the village.
- Drainage issues and sewage treatment is already overloaded along Oakington Rd and does not know how, as a village, infrastructure can be safeguarded to support new developments and bring in houses required to support amenities in the parish. AH advised that there will be attenuate drainage on their own site, unground crates on the road and foul drainage is being investigated and that all drainage will be on site and not on the capacity in the parish. SL advised that he noted the residents comment and agreed and that it is for the parish to take these concerns on board and move forward and would hope there be no more big development and that this scheme would be the limit for development in the parish.
- 29 houses is a large number of homes which will result in a large number of cars. AH advised that with any development there must be enough value in the scheme in order to deliver benefits and originally 34 units were considered but this was already reduced and may change again after conversations with SCDC. However, it is the role of developers to ensure schemes have sufficient parking and that overflow traffic is limited in the village and any upgrades to the road network are put in place as part of the scheme and highways will be key ensuring drop off at school is also carefully managed.
- Provisions of the scheme for net carbon zero. AH advised that it is a requirement of SCDC to have renewables on site and at this stage will be considering charging points for electric cars

etc and then when the scheme is eventually taken to market it will be with specific developers who PG think would have high quality design and build, unlikely to be any PLC housebuilders and sustainability will be considered.

DDL advised that he did not think that the sifting had yet taken place for sites and queried as to the landownership for this scheme. AH explained that PG have been instructed by trustees whom are owners of the land they are not a developer and they were instructed to carry out the application themselves and formulate a scheme the landowners would like to see for the village and which involves consultation and can all be fixed through outline planning permission before the scheme is anywhere near a housebuilder/developer, with the landowner creating a legacy for the site which will benefit the whole village.

4. To Agree to hold a Public Forum

No items were raised within the public forum

5. To Approve the Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 28th July & 3rd August 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of both Tuesday 28th July 2020 & 3rd August 2020 be approved and signed by the chairman as a true and accurate copy of the meeting.

6. Matters Arising from the Minutes, Report of any actions and Resolutions from last meeting – See Appendix 1

- SL raised publicly that there is a councillor vacancy and volunteers needed for Speed Watch
- SL advised in relation to the Legacy Fund works they were due to be completed before school, however, Pam Hobson advised that they are still awaiting a response from highways contractors to commence works.
- RESOLVED items – j, k & l
- FP advised that she received a quotation for chippings at Long Lane (Item o) of £27.50 a tonne for a 10-tonne load and that this will work out cheaper for a larger order. **Action** – KC agreed to measure site and liaise with FP for ordering.
- **Action** – Item q. KC to attend village hall management committee meeting next week
- Item s. to be removed as no vehicles have recently been advertised and if they are in future KC agreed to deal with this issue.
- SL has contacted Oakington re: cycle path and they are happy to support some form of cycle path – SL will continue to follow up
- All other items on the appendix are ongoing

7. To Accept a Report from County and District Councillors

LH – see Appendix 3 for report. Further to her report LH advised that there is unfortunately still no movement in relation to the cycle path link project for Dry Drayton, due to continuing negotiations between the agents for CCC and the landowner's agents. LH advised that it is likely to be an extended process which is sad as it is now two years since funding was allocated for the project, however, she did reassure the parish that the funding will remain in place and even be augmented if the need arises.

DDL see Appendix 4 for report. In addition to his report DDL advised that in the afternoon he attended a meeting of the Green Group in SCDC and the consideration for the future of turning road verges into meadows and only cutting grass on verges twice a year rather than 8-10 times in a year. DDL advised that this scheme would require management and that Eddington is an example to see what is possible and he would encourage parishes to consider this scheme.

8. To Discuss Planning Matters

a. Applications received for consideration

i. 20/03023/FUL – Irwin Centre, Scotland Rd CB23 8AU- Extension to provide extended and additional office units and the provision of an onsite cafe and new car parking area on former agricultural land

FP left the meeting at this point due to a declaration of interest. SL explained that this and 8. a. ii) were resubmissions that included more supporting information, essentially a Bidwell's document, one point SL highlighted of importance with the document was that it stated between 300-400 people would be using the site at the Irwin Centre and SL does not believe there is anything supportive within the proposal for the parish. Concerns were raised from councillors regarding the additional vehicles that could potentially be using the village and they remain unconvinced

regarding the public transport options for the site. It was proposed by SL that the previous objections for Irwin Centre were resubmitted and further noted that DDPC are uncomfortable with the potential number of additional vehicles using the village considering the numbers outlined in the Bidwell's report. KC seconded and all councillors agreed RESOLVED. **Action** – Clerk to submit comments

ii. **20/03013/FUL – Scotland Farm, Scotland Road, CB23 8AU - Erection of an agricultural workers dwelling for seasonal farm workers**

SL advised that the applicant for this proposal spoke with him at length after the last parish council meeting and explained these temporary workers could be using the dwelling for up to 10 months of the year, through the farming cycle and they would not be housing workers that are working solely in fields locally but for the applicants business, this includes approximately 27-28 additional parishes. SL proposed that the comments submitted previously were reiterated. All councillors agreed RESOLVED. An issue raised by TSH was the use of temporary portacabins on site and whether this would replace these or be in addition to them, it was discussed that it is believed that the portacabins would not be controlled by planning. **Action** – SL to review previous submission of comments and make any relevant changes.

9. **b. To provide an update on NMU/cycle path project (this item was brought forward by the chairman as FP was still not in the meeting and had a declaration of interest)**

SL explained that this project has been delayed and is at an impasse due to PX Farms not readily working with the Highways authority, an alternative to proceed without acquiring land has been investigated, however, highways have advised that it would not be possible due to the location being too narrow and dangerous. SL advised that all DDPC can do is to keep pushing and he highlighted the importance of the project as an attendee at the meeting had had a near miss whilst cycling along the area for the cycle path, LH advised that she was horrified to hear this and was very upset on behalf of DDPC. LH explained that she has spoken extensively to the cycling officer who is unfortunately constrained by new government guidance which stresses even more on minimum widths although they are considering taking robust action to acquire the land, however, this does take time.

iii. **20/03593/HFUL – 50 High Street, CB23 8BS – To construct a two-storey extension at the rear of the dwelling**

FP re-entered the meeting. SL raised concerns of the effect on neighbouring properties as to how they may be affected by light, height issues etc from this application and proposed that reservations and that it should be commented to SCDC that they are mindful of neighbouring properties, all councillors agreed RESOLVED. **Action** - SEM to submit comments to SCDC.

iv. **20/03592/HFUL – 52 High Street, CB23 8BS – To construct a two-storey extension at the rear of the dwelling**

This was the same application as iii. So same comments to be submitted.

v. **New premises licence application – Lord Conrad's Brewery, Unit 2, Dry Drayton Industries, Scotland Rd CB23 8AT – comment deadline 11th September 2020**

JD explained that the business is trying to protect itself from the effects of Covid-19 and as the business has reached its limit at the brewery for event licences it has had to move the bottle shop to Unit 8, however, it is assured that they are not opening a pub, a licenced premises or competing with the pub and only protecting and not changing their business model. SL proposed support of the application and all councillors agreed with no objections RESOLVED. **Action** – Clerk to submit support.

b. Decisions received from South Cambs District Council

i. **20/02618/FUL – 46 Pettitts Lane, CB23 8BT - Demolition of existing bungalow and replacement with new Passivahaus bungalow, adjacent double garage with covered link and installation of new residential annex accommodation – application WITHDRAWN**

- ii. **20/01065/HFUL – The Flat, 3a Old Rectory Drive - Single storey front and side extension and replacement of existing flat roof with conventional gable end pitched roof - GRANTED**

10. Matters for discussion/correspondence received

- a. **To advise of SCDC LED upgrade to streetlights – works due to be completed in Sept 20**
Item was for information, works for the upgrade scheduled for September 2020.
- c. **To discuss participation in the Community Gritting Scheme – deadline 31/10/20**
SL last year – JD made decision due to health and safety not to participate. Agree not to take part now but can change mind at any point.
- d. **To discuss road verge management enquiry email of 11th August 2020**
DDL discussed under item 7. KC advised that would be supportive of the scheme and believes it is a nice initiative. FP enquired as to whether planting would be required, or the area left wild, DDL confirmed that it would require management. SL proposed to advise of provisional interest, all councillors agreed RESOLVED. **Action** – Clerk to reply to email for more information.

11. Consultations

- a. **North East Cambridge Area Action Plan – ends 5th October 2020**
SL will review and email councillors to advise if he believes we are affected and whether comments will be required.

12. Finance and Policy

- a. **To accept account review to date and bank reconciliation**
All figures correct but carried forward date is for the wrong month, clerk to amend and all councillors are happy to resolve the account and bank reconciliation with amendment RESOLVED (see Appendix 2).
- b. **To advise of payments received**
 - i. **CCC – Grass Cutting Reimbursement - £555.26**
- c. **Payments made between 28th July 2020 and 2nd August 2020**
 - i. **Brookfield -Grass Cutting - £360.00 should be cut 4 not 5 error on invoice**
This payment was for Cut 5 as can be seen with Item 12. d. iv. An error was made, and Brookfield Groundcare did not issue the Invoice for Cut 4 until the clerk raised a query following the last parish council meeting. All councillors agreed payment RESOLVED. Payment approved online by SL and JD. *Public Health Act 1875, s.164; Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10; Commons Act 1899*
 - ii. **ICO – Data protection fee - £35.00**
This payment was originally agreed at the previous parish council meeting for £40.00, however, payment could only be made by cheque or direct debit, therefore, all councillors agreed to the direct debit option as the fee is reduced from £40.00 a year to £35.00 for this option. SL has a direct debit mandate and will liaise with JD for completion and signing.
 - iii. **Cams ACRE – Annual membership - £57.00**
All councillors agreed payment – RESOLVED. Payment approved online by SL and JD. *Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, s.143*
 - iv. **Clerks overtime and expenses (Period 4) - £49.53**
All councillors agreed payment – RESOLVED. Payment approved online by SL and JD. *LGA 1972, s.112*
 - v. **LGS Services – Internal Audit Fee - £90.00**
All councillors agreed payment – RESOLVED. Payment approved online by SL and JD. *LGA 1972, s.111*
 - vi. **SLCC – Annual Membership - £46.67**
All councillors agreed payment – RESOLVED. Payment approved online by SL and JD. *LGA 1972, s.143*
- d. **Payments to hand**
 - i. **S Etherington-Meech – Period overtime/expenses - £49.53**

This relates to Period 5. All councillors agreed payment – RESOLVED. Payment to be approved online by SL and JD. *LGA 1972, s.112*

ii. **Came & Company – Annual Insurance Premium - £352.85**

SL reviewed cover and raised concern over the £50.00 admin fee of £50.00, clerk explained that DDPC are in a long term agreement (LTA) until October 2021, SL queried if an admin fee can be charged with an LTA and all councillors agreed that clerk should contact Came & Company to query before payment is made **(Action)**

iii. **Haven Power Streetlighting Electricity (July) - £30.16**

Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3; Highways Act 1980, s.301.

iv. **Came in after the agenda was published – Brookfield Groundcare – Grass Cutting – Cut 4 (£360.00) & 6 (£360.00)**

Councillors confirmed that both Cut 4 and 6 were completed. All councillors agreed payment RESOLVED. Payment to be approved online by SL and JD. *Public Health Act 1875, s.164; Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10; Commons Act 1899*

e. **To discuss the purchase of a scanner/printer**

SEM advised DDPC that there is no need currently to purchase a printer.

f. **Review of insurance policy in preparation for renewal on 1st October 2020**

SL and clerk have reviewed the policy and all councillors agree renewal once the admin fee charge is clarified and annual premium paid.

g. **Review of internal audit report and actions to be discussed**

SEM advised DDPC that the internal audit raised that some procedural actions were missed or not fully documented, and the full details are available on the internal audit report that the clerk has circulated to the councillors. SEM informed DDPC that completion of her CILCA qualification would assist her with actions such as these in the future. No issues were raised by DDPC regarding the report.

13. To accept notices and matter for the next agenda

Please note that no decisions can lawfully be made under this item. *LGA 1972 s12 10(2) (b)* states that business must be specified; therefore, the Council cannot lawfully raise matters for discussion.

- Assistance/schemes to tackle loneliness for the elderly in the parish following the Covid-19 pandemic
- Drainage at the bottom of Long Lane
- Closure of the saving accounts/moving to online accounts

14. Date and time of next meeting

Proposed and agreed meeting dates until the end of 2020 – Tuesday 6th October 2020 at 7.30pm, Tuesday 3rd November at 7.30pm & Tuesday 1st December 2020 at 7.30pm all to be held via Zoom

Meeting closed at 8.52pm

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw, *Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.*

15. To discuss clerk's annual salary increment, review of hours and pension set up progress

In confidential minutes

Appendix 1

Action Report/Ongoing Issues

a.	Councillor Vacancy (ongoing)	DDPC
b.	2021/22 LHI Application for Oak Crescent (ongoing)	SL/LH
c.	2020/21 LHI and Legacy Fund (Pam Hobson) Works Progress	SL/LH
d.	Park Lane Verges/Cycle path upgrade/line painting/drainage (ongoing)	SL/LH
e.	Quotation from Brookfield/exact location & frequency and grass cutting reimbursement query for CC (SL)/"listed to cut" info (SEM) (ongoing)	SL/SEM/LH
f.	Landowner contact re: allotment fencing	SL/JD/SEM
g.	Drift clearance date arranged	SL/JD
h.	Tidy up of area in front of fence at Pettitts Lane	SL
i.	Old Rectory Windows concerns (ongoing)	SL
j.	SL contact with Oakington PC re: cycle path	SL
k.	SEM – submission of planning comments – Irwin Centre/Scotland Farm/46 Pettitts Lane	SEM
l.	UK Power Networks – progress for electricity connection upgrade – progress	SL
m.	Bank changes - CBS (Change of signatories/address) Lloyds online banking access for EP	SL/SEM
n.	Recruitment of volunteers for village Speed watch team (Ongoing)	SL/JD
o.	Quotation for chippings required at Long Lane	FP
p.	Draft letter re: hedging/signage 'Pathfinder' Long Distance Walk	SL
q.	Village Hall Management Committee new members/meetings	JD/EP/KC
r.	Arrangement of new councillor training for JD, FP & KC (ongoing)	JD/KC/FP
s.	KC contact resident re: vehicles for sale on green	JD/KC

Appendix 2

DRY DRAYTON PARISH COUNCIL June 20 - Aug 20 Bank Reconciliation

	£
Lloyds TSB current account on 29 th June 2020	£18,366.75
<p><u>Less</u> payments presented from 29th June 2020 to 28th August 2020</p> <p><i>7 online payments, 2 direct debit and 2 standing orders</i></p>	£1,515.97
<p><u>Plus</u>, receipts presented from 29th June 2020 to 28th August 2020</p> <p><i>1 bank giro credit received</i></p>	£555.26
Closing bank account on 28 th August 2020	£17,406.04
<u>Less outstanding payments not yet subtracted</u>	£40.00
Balance carried forward at 28th August 2020	£ 17,366.04

<i>Plus</i> , NS&I Investment Account as at 1 st April 2020	£5,174.03
CBS S106 Account as of 1 st April 2020	<u>£7,060.61</u>
£29,600.68	

Notes:

Sarah Etherington-Meech

RFO

7th September 2020

Appendix 3

Cambridgeshire County Councillor's Report Dry Drayton Parish Council - 08 September 2020 meeting

August is usually a quiet month for the County Council with regard to meetings. However, in the current situation, there has been much other work to keep both officers and councillors occupied. The storm that followed the spell of very warm weather has certainly kept highways and drainage officers busy. As a councillor who has always represented villages where flooding is a risk, I am used to watching carefully for signs that one of them may suddenly be overwhelmed. Thankfully this summer the only area in Dry Drayton that seems to have been greatly affected was the bottom of Park Lane where I imagine even the most adventurous of those who use this route as a cut through, found the accumulation of water sufficient to deter them from doing so for a time. The enquiries that I made about at risk areas once I could see how heavy the deluge was, didn't identify any homes that were in danger, although at Bar Hill in one particular location it was a very close run thing. Our local highways officer has previously given an undertaking to make further investigations as to why the Park Lane area is so susceptible. I will allow a little time for him to deal with the more urgent items in the additional work that the recent rainfall event has given rise to, and will then ask for a progress report on the Park Lane issue.

Health

Health committee [of which I am a member] did, as you might expect, meet in August. Much of the meeting was taken up with updates on Covid-19 by the director of public health for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough [DoPH] and the accountable officer for the clinical commissioning group that covers that same area [AOCCG].

Introducing her update report, the DoPH explained that historically the Covid-19 incidence rate in Huntingdonshire and Peterborough had been significantly higher than the national average. It was highlighted that Peterborough still had a relatively high cumulative rate of Covid-19 cases at around 20 per 100,000 against a national average of 7 per 100,000. However, Huntingdonshire's cumulative rate had decreased and was now similar to that of the national average. Cambridgeshire had a cumulative rate similar to or slightly below the national average. She explained that since the middle of June the number of daily confirmed Covid-19 cases had been stable. However, there had been a slight increase in recent weeks. The data showed that there was still a level of transmission of Covid-19 in Cambridgeshire and therefore it was important that individuals kept following the Government guidance. It was essential that everyone adhered to social distancing measures, maintained good hand hygiene, wore face coverings where required and self-isolated with their households immediately if they developed symptoms of Covid-19. She emphasised that it was essential for people to self-isolate if they were contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service. It was reported that there had been 399 Covid-19 related deaths in Cambridgeshire in the period from March to June 2020. Both Covid-19 related deaths and all-cause death rates in Cambridgeshire were better than or similar to the national average during these 4 months.

Following the publication of new national guidance for workplaces and offices, a health and safety group is reviewing carefully how the council's own staff may start to return to their normal place of work. Since the initial nationwide lockdown the council has been carrying out many of its normal functions on a virtual basis. As has been found in many of the organisations who have been able to sustain their functions with staff working from home, productivity has been high and staff have adapted well to the change. Their normal working environments are now being risk assessed so that staff can return to the office in a proportionate way to ensure that social distancing measures can be adhered to.

The AOCCG advised members that further directions had been received from NHS England acknowledging the move from a level 4, 'national emergency' to a level 3, 'regional emergency'. This has subsequently been endorsed by a slow handover of responsibilities to local authorities. This is to be welcomed as they are much more agile and better informed about their local populations and, as I'm sure you will have seen in the media, many local authorities have for some while been calling for greater responsibility to be handed over to them.

Members were particularly interested to hear how the CCG is managing what the AOCCG described as phase 3 of the emergency in which it needs to continue to respond to Covid-19 whilst reintroducing more services. She informed the committee that cancer services had continued to operate throughout Covid-19. However, there is wider concern that people potentially having cancer [and other illnesses] have not been coming forward for investigation and possibly life saving treatment, due to fear of contracting the virus or overwhelming the NHS.

The committee was told that the CCG had a small window in which to complete as much elective activity as possible whilst at the same time starting crucial winter preparations in anticipation of a second spike of Covid-19. However, it seems that the importance has been recognised of switching off less services than had been done when the first wave of the virus hit. The CCG recognises that staff are fatigued following a long period of very intense work and they are now being encouraged to take a break in order to prepare them for winter.

Education

Having worked through detailed risk assessments and closely monitored the local situation during lock down, schools were able to open their doors this week to more than the children of key workers and those known to be vulnerable that they have catered for over past months. A comprehensive 'Welcome Back to School' guide has been provided for all parents and carers of children returning to school. Some parents are understandably still nervous about letting their children go back to school but, under the direction of a highly respected director of education, everything that can be done to make schools Covid safe has been done and the county council will monitor the situation to ensure that this continues.

Environment

Cambridgeshire households can now register for the chance to club together to buy and install solar panels at a reduced price. The county council has, along with district councils, joined forces with a company called Solar Together in an initiative to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions. Households and small and medium sized enterprises can now register, free and without obligation, for a group buying scheme at: www.solartogether.co.uk/cambridgeshire. The county council will arrange an auction with pre-vetted installers on 06 October 2020. This will take the form of a reverse auction which means that the lowest bid wins. The winning bidder will set the price for all solar and battery systems. After the auction each registered household will receive a recommendation based on the information that it has supplied, and will have six weeks to decide whether or not to take up the recommendation. The offer is for a complete service including all equipment, survey, installation, monitoring and warranties. Households that already have solar panels installed can also register to have battery storage added to their existing installation to maximise the benefits of their system.

I hope that you were all able to enjoy some rest and relaxation during the summer despite the constraints of the continuing situation with Covid-19. I look forward to seeing you at your meeting. Take care. Stay safe.

Lynda - lyndaharford@icloud.com; 01954 251775/07889 131022; follow me on Twitter: @2whit2whoo



Appendix 4

District Councillor's report for September

A lot of remote meetings this month but not of much relevance to us.

I had a useful meeting with Anthony Browne, our MP, and found him sympathetic to my concerns. Among other things we discussed climate change, the future of local councils, and planning. I noted wryly that there are billions of pounds investment to be found in covid-19 but little in climate change, and he wryly acknowledged that governments are not good at long-term issues, but he is doing what he can. He agrees that the current 5 layers of local government (Parish, District, County, Greater Cambridge and Combined Authority) don't make sense but doesn't see immediate change. He thinks the planning White Paper will be implemented within the lifetime of this parliament, but it will not change much immediately. It was good to have direct contact with him.

I have now studied the White Paper. Two repeated themes are striking: one a focus on beauty and the other the importance of using digital technology (including the odd claim that the new system will be 'based on data, rather than documents' p25). Two notable absentees are any reference to the problem of land-banking, and the issue of developer profits. Developers are able to build into their projected costs a profit of (I think) 20%, supposedly to account for their risk. This is then taken into account when assessing, for instance, the amount of community facility and affordable housing which can be imposed by the local authority. It is claimed that the new system will reduce risk but no suggestion that this should affect developer profits. The paper is full of aspiration, much of it excellent, but so free of detail that assessment is not easy. One proposal which may prove particularly problematic is that Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy would be replaced by a single levy, 'a fixed proportion of the development value above a threshold' which would be set centrally. The great advantage of S106 is that it reacts to local issues, such as the huge expense of dealing with contaminated land. This alternative could turn out to be very expensive to Councils. Another is the proposed expansion of permitted development rights; we have already seen abuse of such rights in our area. Details of the White Paper and the consultation can be found at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future (or tinyurl.com/y5d4jw8v).

Cabinet on 2 Sept looked at the first quarter's performance. Inevitably the effects of the pandemic were seen, sometimes starkly, in some areas (eg business rate income and B&B costs for housing the homeless) but most remarkable to my mind was my own bête noir -- our Contact Centre. Its performance has improved remarkably over the past three months; and furthermore I am now promised what I have been asking for over several years: details including standard deviations which may enable us to assess where the real problems are. But perhaps homeworking has already solved them?

We are gradually opening the Cambourne SCDC Hall to officers who wish to return though many are working happily and productively from home. We shall also be open to residents who need to visit in person, though only at present by appointment bookable from our www.scambs.gov.uk website.

Douglas de Lacey