

South Cambridgeshire District Councillor's Monthly Report

Month of May 2012

1. South Cambridgeshire Youth Council

The Council has opened up nominations for the Youth Council, starting from 1st April. Members of the Youth council will represent young people in all the Council's work, highlight the issues of concern to the young people, and have a real say in things that happen in South Cambridgeshire.

There are 20 places up for grabs and these are open to all young people between the ages of 13 and 18 who live in South Cambridgeshire. Nominations close on August 1st and, if there are enough candidates, an election will be held in September.

For more information, call Tracy Mann on 01954 713342 or email tracy.mann@Scambs.gov.uk. Follow <http://www.facebook.com/SCYouthCouncil>

2. Start of New Municipal Year

The new municipal year sees the administration in South Cambs still Conservative led, and with an increased majority. The political composition now stands at 33 Conservative, 16 Liberal Democrat, 1 Labour and 7 Independent.

The first full council meeting went better than expected. However, it showed the flavour of the next year to come, as the administration decided to increase the number of portfolios from seven to eight (increasing cost to taxpayer). Unfortunately, the administration has taken a retrograde step backwards in the way it is handling affairs of the council and the iron fist has closed. We can only hope that policy gets a better and fairer treatment. That is to be seen however particularly as the planning enforcement sub-committee seems to have been jettisoned without consultation, and then hurriedly re-instated after a request for clarification from one of the Independent councillors. Not to mention the change in chair and vice chair selection for the Scrutiny committee, This Committee is non political and is supposed to keep a close eye on all decision making to ensure that everything is being done correctly and transparently. Best practice is for this Committee to be chaired by the opposition. That was the case until recently and this year both positions have been kept by the controlling group. It is unclear why they have gone against accepted best practice but it will undoubtedly not enhance the council's reputation. Neither will appointing all Committee Chairmen on their political affiliation rather than their ability to do the best job for South Cambs citizens

3. Local Development Plan (LDP)

In March and April, SCDC conducted a series of workshops with Members, Parish Councils, RSLs and other stakeholders to gather evidence and to start preparing the LDP. The notes from those workshops are now available to view at <http://bit.ly/SCLP1>. The results of the call for sites for Caldecote can be found at <http://bit.ly/SHLAA1> and <http://bit.ly/SHLAA2>. These show large plots proposed at the rear of West Drive, Grafton Drive and Strympole Way, as well as Bourn airfield.

The process of preparing the new local plan is taking a further step forward as members meet on 28 June 2012, to consider the evidence and discuss the options. Formal public consultation is planned to take place between Friday 13 July and Friday 28 September 2012. Please make sure you send in your views when the time comes.

4. Library Closure

Cambridgeshire County Council is installing a new, modern library system that it hopes will improve the library catalogue and provide a wider range of services, including a new Library App for mobile devices. The system has been funded by Improvement East and will pave the way for improved customer service. The Comberton library will therefore be close for one day on Wednesday 20 June 2012. During the period of 11-

22 June 2012, customers will not be able to use Wi-Fi in the libraries, or do telephone renewals, or get e-books/online information sources, or catalogues etc. You can still borrow and return items normally and use the PCs.

5. Grants

Elite Athletes Award Scheme was set up in 2008 to support aspiring athletes in the district. Three levels of support for athletes competing at regional, national and world class.

Charlotte Cox, 21 year-old athlete from Toft, was awarded £1,000, to help in preparations to continue to compete nationally and win her group at the MENCAP nationals in June and compete for Team GB at the Paralympic Games in 2016.

6. Land Adjacent to Casa De Fosetta – Planning application S/1383/11 Change of use to Touring Caravan site

The decision notice for the planning approval has now been issued, which means that the planning consent is officially given. This has happened in spite of all the letters sent in to South Cambs by residents, raising various issues. It had been hoped that there would be enough new material facts identified which could have resulted in the application being referred back to committee for determination. This was not the case however, and the decision notice was issued on 31 May 2012.

The site owner has subsequently started work on the site, unauthorised, as he had not discharged the pre-commencement conditions that were attached to the planning consent. SCDC officers attended the site swiftly after being notified and stopped the unauthorised works. This is an unfortunate incidence in the continuing saga of this site

7. Casework

Your Councillor is here to help you. Please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints. I can be contacted by phone, email or via my website. I hope I can help but even if I can't, then it's highly likely that I know someone who can!

8. Dates for your diary

20 June 2012	All Day	Comberton Library closed for one day
28 June 2012	10.00 hrs	Local Plan Special Meeting for Elected Members
13 July – 28 Sep 2012		Local Plan Public Consultation
1 st August 2012	5pm	Close of Nominations for Youth Council

Tumi

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7-June-12

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