

South Cambridgeshire District Councillor's Monthly Report

January 2013

1. SCDC Development Plans – new consultation – Have Your Say

In summer 2012 SCDC held the first consultation on its proposals for the Local Development Plan, which will set out how land in South Cambridgeshire is to be developed from now to 2031. A second consultation is now to take place on additional Issues and options that arose from the first consultation. Main points of note for our communities are:

- (1) Development options on the edge of Cambridge City are being considered by collaborative working with the city council
- (2) A set of 10 new sites have been identified as having potential for development, including Bennell Farm, Comberton, but which is in Toft Parish. This may be an opportunity for Toft parish council to discuss and negotiate with Comberton parish council on outstanding issues to the mutual benefit of both communities.
- (3) Land at Bourn Airfield, former TKA site, is being considered for alternative types of employment use to address the long standing noise issues associated with current use class and is in addition to the proposed 3000 housing option for the airfield site
- (4) Caldecote and Toft have potential green spaces/recreation grounds to be designated for protection
- (5) There is a proposal to remove the buildings of Comberton Village College from Toft Parish and include in the village framework of Comberton. Toft Parish Council may have something to say about this!

A series of public exhibitions will also be held at various venues where you can meet officers and ask specific questions. The most convenient for our villages are on 10th January 2013 at The Hub, High Street, Cambourne, and 23rd January at Comberton Village Hall, Green End Road, both between 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

Consultation starts on Monday 7th January 2013 and ends at 5pm Friday 18th February 2013. The full document can be downloaded in two parts, from <http://bit.ly/LDP2-P1> for the joint consultation with Cambridge City, and from <http://bit.ly/LDP2-P2> for the further sites for South Cambs.

You can send in your comments in one of several ways: online at <http://scambs.jdi-consult.net/ldf> which is the preferred method, downloading and completing the response form at <http://bit.ly/LDP2-P> (pdf format) or <http://bit.ly/LDP2-W> (word format), by completing the questionnaire leaflet which you can download at <http://bit.ly/LDP2-Q>, or email your comments to ldf@scambs.gov.uk or in writing to Planning Policy, SCDC, South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne Cambridge CB23 6EA.

2. SCDC Budget and Grants Review Update

SCDC has recently had confirmation that central government will be cutting funding to the council for the next financial year by £1m. Over the next 5 years, SCDC expects to receive £600k less from New Homes Bonus. So, the cabinet will be saying that savings need to be made, most likely in the areas already identified.

Following my last report about the proposed cuts of £300,000 from the grants budget for next municipal year, the Leader agreed that consultations should take place with those potentially affected by the proposed cuts. The consultation ended on 20th December 2012 and we now await the outcome of that which will be reported at the Leader's Portfolio meeting on 1st February 2013. It is doubtful that the Council will not make the cuts in spite of the opposition that has already been expressed, but let's wait and see.

If you have any suggestions to help identify areas of service where the cuts can be made, please feel free to contact me, or the council directly.

3. SCDC New Look Website

Last month, I reported that a “new and improved” customer contact service centre opened at the Council Offices in Cambourne enabling residents and businesses to get in touch by phone and web-chat.

I can now report that the Council has launched a “new look” website, which was developed in response to the increasing number of residents wanting to do carry out their transactions online at times convenient for them. The new look website should make it easier for residents to Pay for it - Apply for it – Report it. It just means the site is easier to navigate, and users should be able to find what they need quickly/efficiently so they can pay bills, report problems and apply for services from the Council.

The Council can still be contacted by phone on 03450 450 500 and the website is still at www.scambs.gov.uk

4. Transport

Local transport for our villages is changing drastically from April 2013 when the County withdraws all subsidies. However, it is also an opportunity to start afresh and design our local public transport system to suit our communities. SCDC is working in partnership with the County to try and come up with workable solutions, but it requires input from residents and bus users. Hopefully the County project, which the County councillor will report on, will build on some of the work that we have done specifically with regards to Bus No. 18. Toft and Kingston Parish Councils can hopefully grasp this opportunity to its full potential. Initial meeting is taking place at Comberton Village Hall on 23rd January 2013 at 7.30pm.

Demand Responsive Transport: This is an SCDC initiative which aims to provide transport on demand. Residents may be able to book transport up to 7 days in advance, for a door-to-door service to work, doctor’s surgery etc. The District Council would like to hear your views on how this might work and if communities are interested in such a service, as this will help them put the case to potential funding partners. To find out more and to download the survey form, please go to www.tumihawkins.org.uk/transport-on-demand

5. SCDC Business Support Service and Fund

This is to remind everyone that the SCDC Business Support Fund is still available. The scheme being run by Exemplas on behalf of SCDC, offers free business advice and guidance to eligible small and medium businesses and may also provide grants of up to £1,000 to support struggling businesses.

It runs various types of workshops for those wanting to start a new business or those looking to grow their existing businesses. These workshops are free and take place in Cambourne, Fulbourn and Foxton.

The Business Support Fund is available to anyone that has been running a business within a South Cambridgeshire postcode for at least 12 months and can who demonstrate that the recession has caused or still causing them difficulties.

To book a workshop place or find if you or your business qualifies for a grant, call 0844 346 0755 (Mon-Fri) or email southcambsbusinesssupport@exemplas.com or visit www.exemplas.com/southcambs.

The service is only **available until 29 March 2013**, so get your skates on.

6. Broadband – Connecting Cambridgeshire

As always, this is a reminder to residents of Toft, Kingston and Old Caldecote to continue to register their demand for broadband services at www.ConnectingCambridgeshire.co.uk. We need to have all premises registered to stand a chance of getting the exchange upgraded.

Please encourage anyone you know in those villages to register.

People who do not have access to the internet can register online or on paper forms in libraries, council offices and other public places. Registration numbers as at end of December were still low for Toft at 19.4% but for Kingston is 43% which is encouraging.

The County Council is now hoping to appoint a supplier this month, so keep those registrations coming in. Please encourage your neighbours and friends to register or call me if they need assistance.

7. Broadband – BT Infinity for Highfields Caldecote

Santa seems to have missed one stop, as residents of Highfields Caldecote are still waiting on BT to commission the PON (Passive Optical Network) that will bring superfast broadband to the remaining majority. It is frustrating that “technical problems” are still being claimed as causing the delay and inability to give a firm date. Keep watching this space or check my blog for updates.

8. 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!

To assist me in improving my service to you, I will be holding councillor surgeries jointly with County Councillor Fiona Whelan as follows:

Caldecote Village Hall: first Thursdays of the month, starting 7th February 2013 7pm – 8pm,
Kingston Village Hall: second Thursdays of every other month, starting 10th January 2013, 7pm – 8pm
Toft People's Hall: first Mondays of every month, starting 7th January 2013, 6pm – 7pm

9. Dates for your diary

7 January 2013	9 am	SCDC 2 nd Issues and Options Consultation starts
7 January 2013	6pm-7pm	Councillor Surgery, Toft People's Hall
9 January 2013	10am	Planning Committee Meeting
10 January 2013	7pm-8pm	Councillor Surgery, Kingston Village Hall
14 January 2013	10am	SCDC Cabinet Meeting
24 January 2013	2pm	Full Council Meeting
1 February 2013	10am	Leaders Portfolio Meeting
4 February 2013	6pm-7pm	Councillor Surgery, Toft People's Hall
7 February 2013	7pm-8pm	Councillor Surgery, Caldecote Village Hall
18 February 2013	5pm	SCDC 2 nd Issues and Options Consultation ends
23 January 2013	9.30am-12.30pm	Exemplas Workshop “Starting a Business”
30 January 2013	1.30pm-4.30pm	Exemplas Workshop “How to research your market”
7 February 2013	9.30am-12.30pm	Exemplas Workshop “Managing money & making profit”
22 February 2013	9.30am-12.30pm	Exemplas Workshop “Planning your business”

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5-Jan-13

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