

South Cambridgeshire District Councillor's Monthly Report

March 2013

1. SCDC Local Development Plan - Update

The second consultation closed on Monday 18th February 2013 5pm. The results are now being collated. Further to that, we have had two workshops for the councillors, where we've discussed some of the outcomes of the first consultation. Some of the key issues discussed include the criteria on delivering high quality homes-e.g. housing mix, village frameworks, exception sites etc. Also discussed issues on what types of new employment to provide for, employment buildings, tourist attractions and accommodation and how we protect village amenities (such as pubs, shops etc.). Provision for Gypsy and travellers was also discussed. There will be further discussions in the next month or so, and I hope to be able to give you more details as time goes on.

2. Finance – Council Tax

Unfortunately, it's a bit of bad news on this one. At the full council meeting that took place on Thursday 28th, the council approved a 4% rise in SCDC element of the council tax for the year 2013/14. For a Band D property, this equates to £120.46, Band A being £80.31 and Band H being £240.92 for the year. This will be on top of the increase in any parish precept. The vote was carried at 33 for, 10 against and 1 abstention. This is unfortunate, considering the higher costs of living that we are all facing and the squeezed incomes. The opposition put in a proposal asking that the council tax be frozen again this year, and the shortfall be made up from the £7m reserves that the council currently sits on but this proposal was defeated.

The Band D figures for the Ward are as follows (the full council tax includes the parish precept)

	Parish Precept	County/District/Fire/Police Precept
Caldecote	£120.84	£1583.56
Kingston	£70.85	£1533.57
Toft	£71.43	£1534.15

The average parish precept in the district is £73.55, and the average council tax is £1,536.27. The Caldecote figures are surprisingly the highest in the district.

3. SCDC Business Support Service and Fund

This is the last month that the SCDC Business Support Fund will be available. It ends on **29 March 2013**.

The timetable for the remaining workshops is at the end of my report.

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@examplas.com or visit www.exemplas.com/southcambs.

4. South Cambs Magazine

The delivery of the spring edition of the SCDC residents' magazine started on Saturday 23 February and is ongoing. Everyone in the district should have received their copy by Sunday 10 March.

If any resident experiences delivery problems and have not received their magazine by Monday 11 March please contact the delivery contractor PDC directly on 01904 606300 or customerservice@teampdc.co.uk, and also contact me so I can follow it up. You can also contact the Council on 08450 450500.

5. Broadband – Race to Infinity

On 25th February 2013, I received an email from Dr Walsh, the BT Partnership Director in response to my prodding emails, and I quote the relevant part which says *"I have been talking to Openreach to find out what is going on with the final 2 PON areas in your exchange area, and I now understand that both of them failed their commissioning tests. Openreach engineers are currently working through the issues they found at commissioning and have promised to give me a further update in a few days. I'm sorry that it's not better news, but I don't believe it will be long now."*

I will leave the readers to make their own judgement. It is sad that over two years after we won, we are still waiting. It does not bode well for the Connecting Cambridgeshire project which BT is contracted to roll out!

6. Broadband – Connecting Cambridgeshire

The contract for this project which was awarded to BT in February 2013, will be signed sometime this month and rollout planning will start after that. We don't know in what order the rollout will happen, so keep those registrations coming in to give us a good chance in getting it first. Please encourage your neighbours and friends to register or call me if they need assistance.

7. Local Issues

Land Next to Casa-de-Fosetta: A new planning application has been submitted to SCDC. The reference number is S/0255/13/FL. The application is to build 4 bungalows on the land, and it seems to be the same plan that was submitted a few years ago. I would encourage residents to take a few minutes to look at the plan and to send in comments within the next 21 days.

101A West Drive: The developer was supposed to discharge some pre-commencement conditions before starting work on the site, in particular, Condition 3 of the planning permission which should see the fence along the West Drive end moved and reduced in height. As this has not been done, the matter has been reported to SCDC planning for enforcement action.

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!

9. Councillor Drop-in surgery

Thank you to those who have dropped into talk to us at the councillor drop-in surgeries held jointly with County Councillor Fiona Whelan. The next surgeries will take place as follows

Caldecote Village Hall: first Thursdays of the month, next on 4th April 2013 7pm – 8pm
Kingston Village Hall: second Thursdays of every other month, next on 14th March 2013, 7pm – 8pm
Toft People's Hall: first Mondays of every month, next 1st April 2013, 6pm – 7pm

10. Dates for your diary

6 March 2013	10 am	Planning Committee meeting
14 March 2013	7pm-8pm	Councillor Surgery, Kingston Village Hall
1 April 2013	6pm-7pm	Councillor Surgery, Toft People's Hall
4 April 2013	7pm-8pm	Councillor Surgery, Caldecote Village Hall
20 March 2013	1 pm-4 pm	Exemplas Workshop "Finding and Keeping Customers"
20 March 2013	4.30pm – 7 pm	Exemplas Workshop "Business Networking"

Tumi

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7-Mar-13

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