

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. 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 by the ruling conservatives.

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, the Caldecote figure is surprisingly the highest in the district. The average Band D council tax for the district is £1,536.27 of which £177.93 goes to the Police Authority, £64.26 to Fire Authority, £1,100.07 to County and £120.46 to District and £73.55 to Parish. Based on this, the council tax goes from £975.15 for Band A to £3167.12 for Band H.

Grants Review

SCDC Leader, Cllr Ray Manning, at his portfolio holder meeting in February, approved cuts to the grants budget for the next municipal year. Although the Leader agreed to have consultations, he chose unsurprisingly to ignore the useful suggestions that came out of it. So much for being a listening council!

Upshot is that

1. funding for capital grants has been axed . There will be no grants from SCDC as from 1st April 2013. There is still some money in the pot, and any groups needing a grant should get their applications in to Joseph Minutolo by 28 February 2013. The community chest grants program will continue.
2. The CAB have a 2 year reprieve before their grant is removed
3. the grant that has supported the st-art programme (www.start-arts.org.uk) at our local village colleges has been removed though the Leader made a one off payment of £40 000 to give them breathing space.

The grantfinder service is still available from SCDC for assisting communities to search for grants nationwide. Contact Joseph Minutolo directly, or me and I will do my best to support the application.

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. Youth Council Launched

The South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) Youth Council was formally launched on Wednesday 23rd January 2013. The Council received nominations from young people from across the district, and though 20 places were available, only 15 of them have been filled. The Youth Council will give young people in the district a chance to have a voice and to influence the decisions taken by the Council which will ultimately affect the development of their neighbourhoods. See article on my blog at <http://bit.ly/10MzGMS>

5. South Cambs Magazine

The delivery of the spring edition of the SCDC residents' magazine started on Saturday 23 February and was supposedly completed Sunday 10 March. If you have not received your copy by now, please contact me. You can also call the delivery contractor PDC directly on 01904 606300 or customerservice@teampdc.co.uk, but if you do that, then we won't know about it.

6. Environmental Services

SCDC has decided to increase the fees it charges for some of its Environmental Health services. For example, additional or replacement black, green or blue bins will now be charged £69.50 (formerly £63.50). Stray dog kennelling fees have gone up from £12 to £15 and Pest Control fees have also increased. Reason for increase is that charges will contribute to the efficient and cost effective delivery of a range of council services that impact directly on people's safety and health. List of revised charges can be downloaded at <http://bit.ly/EnvChg>

Trial textile and shoe recycling collection service

A new textile recycling trial started at the end of January in South Cambridgeshire in an attempt to collect textiles and shoes and stop them ending up in landfill. Households in Bar Hill, **Childerley**, Chittering, Dry Drayton, Knapwell, Landbeach, Longstanton, Swavesey and Waterbeach are in the trial. SCDC will roll it out to the rest of the district if the trial proves successful.

7. Broadband – Connecting Cambridgeshire

The contract for this project which was awarded to BT in February 2013, and the contract was signed on 8th March 2013. 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.

8. Local Issues

Planning Appeal: The planning inspectorate has confirmed it has received an appeal relating to the refusal by SCDC of the application S/1814/12/FL to build two houses at Summerhill. Anyone who wishes to make comments to the planning inspector can do so by writing to the Planning Inspectorate or online at <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planninginspectorate>, ref APP/W0530/A/13/2191146.

9. 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!

10. 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

Kingston Village Hall: second Thursdays of every other month, next on 9th May 2013, 7pm – 8pm

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

11. Dates for your diary

29 March 2013		Good Friday (Council offices closed)
1 April 2013		Easter Monday (Council offices closed)
3 April 2013	10am	Planning Committee
4 April 2013	7pm-8pm	Councillor Surgery, Caldecote Village Hall
8 April 2013	6pm-7pm	Councillor Surgery, Toft People's Hall
25 April 2013	2pm	Full Council meeting
2 May 2013	7am -10pm	County Council Elections
9 May 2013	7pm-8pm	Councillor Surgery, Kingston 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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14-Mar-13

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