

# South Cambridgeshire District Councillor's Monthly Report

## June 2013

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### 1. SCDC Local Development Plan - Update

The fourth Member workshop in May threw up the big news – that the bulk of the housing is to be built in new towns after all. These are Waterbeach, Bourn Airfield and West Cambourne, and the ongoing development at Northstowe. There's more details on my website at <http://bit.ly/LDP1301>. There will be some development in some villages, but that list is expected to be released later this week. So we still don't know if the land at Bennell Farm, Comberton will be one of those or not.

The main issue for the ward is the proposed concreting over of the section of A428 from Hardwick to Caxton roundabout, and rightly so, people continue to ask why as I explain on my blog at <http://bit.ly/LDP1302>.

To compound this, the owners of the industrial site at the airfield have submitted a planning application to develop that part of the airfield for other employment use. This is being discussed by Caldecote Parish council on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June.

SCDC has rejected the Toft PC proposal to amend the village framework at the Golf club end of the village.

Public consultation on the draft new LDP is to take place from 9<sup>th</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Have your say.

### 2. SCDC Abolishes Sustainable Energy Committee (SEC)

At the Annual Full council meeting on 23 May 2013, the Tories on the council voted to abolish the SEC. It used to be called the Climate Change Working Group. The Leader (and his supporters), insisted that it had no more work to do, that "sustainability" is now embedded in the work that the council does, and does not need a separate "talking shop", completely ignoring the good work that it could still be doing. This is the committee that has spearheaded the SPEP (Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership), and done loads of other good stuff, and still doing, and can still do. I have written a full article about this is on my website at <http://bit.ly/SECnomore> for those who want to know more. Anyone who has ideas of projects should submit it to the Leader at his portfolio for consideration. Or it can be taken up by a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group.

Talking of which – the Scrutiny and Overview Function at the Council was almost non-existent in the last year. The yearly report to council was a miserly 2.5 pages of "work" done during the year. It was more an overview than scrutiny, there were no task and finish group projects carried out, and no challenge/scrutiny of the decisions taken by cabinet. As a councillor pointed out during the debate "the scrutiny and overview committee had been emasculated". Having abolished the SEC, the cabinet decided to set up a second scrutiny committee to look at partnership working with outside organisations. Not only that, the chair and vice chair are to receive special responsibility allowances totalling £5,243, creating more jobs for the boys at a time when we are supposed to be finding savings. Oh, and when asked where the money will come from, the reply was ..... from savings to be identified. I leave you to make your own judgement!

### 3. Broadband – Connecting Cambridgeshire

"Better broadband is on its way" – so said the last update that the project team sent to broadband champions at the end of last week. We now have an indication of the areas being considered for the first phase, and as I've posted up on my website at <http://bit.ly/CCSfBb01>, of the 50 or so communities, most are in East Cambs, Fenland and Huntingdonshire. Only two, Papworth Everard and Willingham are in South Cambridgeshire. It is expected that these first phase communities will go online by December 2013. I will continue to update and residents can visit [www.ConnectingCambridgeshire.co.uk](http://www.ConnectingCambridgeshire.co.uk) for updates as well.

### 4. Funding for Parish Plan

I tabled my question to the Leader, Cllr Ray Manning, at the Annual Full Council meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2013. Needless to say, he did not answer the question directly as to why he took the decision – in effect changing the rules unilaterally and what plans is he putting in place to help parishes publish their plans. I

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challenged him asking if he valued parish plans so little that he would deny them the resources they needed. I will not insult you with the full reply (read it on my website), but the main points were that (a) there will be no financial help, only officer time and (b) the council will help to point parishes in the direction of other grants. So unfortunately, Toft will now have to bear the cost of the printing on its own.

## 5. Street Sign for Car Park on School Lane

It seems that the car park would have been erected by the County Council as it is Highway specification. However, SCDC emphasises that the parking area off School Lane is not a public car park. It is for the use of the neighbouring residents only although there is no objection to its use by attendees to meetings in the Village Hall. As its not known why the sign was erected in the first place, SCDC would not be in favour of it being replaced and would not replace it.

## 6. Caravans in Car Park on School Lane

An SCDC Housing Officer visited the site to obtain registration of vehicles numbers (on the caravans) and have tried to ascertain the owners through the DVLA. Unfortunately, the DVLA would not cooperate and give SCDC the details! Which is odd, and a shame considering both are government organisations .. whatever happened to partnership working? The officer will be going to the site tomorrow Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June at about 3:00pm to attach "Removal of Abandoned Vehicle" notices on the caravans. That should prompt the owner to remove them. Else they will be removed and disposed of.

## 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. Councillor Drop-in surgery

This normally takes first Mondays of every month, 6pm – 7pm. For the months of July and August, I will be going round Toft, knocking on doors to speak directly with residents. If you want to raise any matters with me, then please let me know by phone or email, and I will make a point to call on you during my roving surgery times.

## 9. Dates for your diary

5 June 2013	10 am	Planning Committee meeting
6 June 2013	7.30-10.30pm	Kingston Blues Band in Kingston Village Hall
11 June 2013	10 am	Planning Policy & Localism Portfolio Holders meeting
1 July 2013	6pm-7pm	Councillor Street Surgery Toft
9 July 2013		Consultation starts – Draft Local Development Plan
5 August 2013	6pm-7pm	Councillor Street Surgery Toft

*Tumi*

Tumi Hawkins  
3-June-13

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