

# **South Cambridgeshire District Councillor's Monthly Report**

**Month of November 2012**

## **1. SCDC Cuts Grant Funding**

At the recent Leader's meeting, Cllr Ray Manning the Leader of the Council accepted the proposal to reduce the grant funding for the next municipal year by £300,000. The reason being given for the cuts is that the Council needs to find savings in its budget to make up for shortfall in funding from Central Government. This is a decision that will affect several groups and organisations in the district, and in particular our young people who have not been consulted at all, and yet the briefing papers state that it not a key decision. **ALL arts funding is set to be removed.** This includes the payments to the 5 village colleges to pay part of the staff salaries for the Arts Development Managers and it is likely that the jobs will go, and there will be no support for community arts, and the Arts Award ceremony may have to be scrapped.

In addition to this, Capital Grants for COMMUNITY, SPORTS AND PLAY will be axed in March 2013, which means there will be NO grants to help communities build community centres or sports pavilions etc. I am very concerned about this proposal, and would urge everyone who is also concerned to write to the Leader with their views. Note that at the same time as the proposed cuts, the Council is also to spend £45,000 to buy new chairs and tables for the Council Chamber.

Latest update is that the Council will consult with parties affected, in particular the Heads of the Village Colleges, Chairman of start, 4 offices of Citizens Advice Bureaux, ACRE. SCDC says it has written to other organisations current receiving funding under the 3-year service support grants and Parish Councils to advice of the proposed changes.

To help organisations and any individuals make comments on the proposed changes, SCDC has put a survey their website, at <http://www.scamb.gov.uk/CommunityandLiving/GrantsReview.htm>. Comments must be sent in by 20<sup>th</sup> December 2012. Consultation with young people will be carried out via a series of focus group including with the Youth Council at its next meeting (16<sup>th</sup> December). Meetings in each of the Village Colleges are currently being organised.

## **2. New Customer Contact Centre opened**

At last, the "new and improved" customer contact service South Cambridgeshire District Council has now opened at the Council Offices in Cambourne. It will allow residents and businesses to get in touch with the Council by phone and web-chat. It is even expected that text messaging will be introduced early next year thus moving SCDC into the new digital age of communications even more. Please note that the telephone number is still the same, 03450 450 500, it's the location of the centre that is different.

In December a new self-service website will also be launched so that customers can carry out more of their business online at any time of the day or night. Most residents should then be able to contact the council in the best way that suits them – that's the plan anyway.

## **3. Broadband – Connecting Cambridgeshire**

A reminder to residents of Toft, Kingston and Old Caldecote to continue to register their demand for broadband services at [www.ConnectingCambridgeshire.co.uk](http://www.ConnectingCambridgeshire.co.uk).

We need to have all premises registered to stand a chance of getting the exchange upgraded. Please encourage any one 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. They can also call me on 01954 210840 for assistance.

#### 4. Architect of the Year Award – Gamlingay Eco Hub

The Gamlingay Eco Hub is making headlines in the architectural world, as the civic Architects won the prestigious Environmental Excellence Award for the design of the Hub. The Eco Hub, which was a community project fully supported by the residents of Gamlingay, was opened in March 2012 by the Hon Andrew Lansley MP. It is manned by volunteers and opens daily from 9am. The Eco Hub hosts the Gamlingay Parish Council, the community library, Stepping Stones Children’s Centre, Gamlingay Youth Clubs and Gamlingay Nursery Hub. It is also available to book for events.

#### 5. 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!

#### 6. Dates for your diary

5 December 2012	10 am	Planning Committee Meeting
20 December 2012		Deadline for comments –Grants Cuts consultation
25 December 2012		Christmas-SCDC offices closed
26 December 2012		Boxing Day-SCDC offices closed
1 January 2013		New Year-SCDC offices closed

**WISHING EVERYONE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR**

*Tumi*

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5-Dec-12

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