

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 5 September 2022 at 7.30pm

Present Caroline Ilott, Chris Herriot, Peter Tye, Geoff Barnes, Pierre Redelinghuys and County Cllr. Peter McDonald and District Cllr. James Hobro. There were 5 members of the public present.

1. Apologies for Absence – Ian Francis and Colin Reynolds

2. Open Forum for Public Participation and notice of Parish Council vacancies

Revd. Angela Melaniphy read out a statement to support the grant application by St Laurence church. Angela explained that many residents had family history that went back many years and used the church for baptisms, weddings and mostly funerals. In the past 30 years the church had buried or interred the ashes of 185 residents of Foxtton village which meant that more than a third of households had an interest in and attachment to the churchyard.

Angela explained that in the past Foxtton Parish Council had supported the church by paying an annual grant towards the cost of maintaining the churchyard. In 2018, further to NALC advice, the Parish Council advised the church that they could no longer legally offer support to maintain the churchyard for the community. Subsequently two grants had been given for the church's work in the village that enabled the church to continue to afford to maintain the churchyard. Last year the Parish Council decided not to provide a grant to the church.

Angela explained that the current situation was unsustainable. The church was a wonderful listed building, open to all, that was very expensive to maintain and everything the church did was paid for by the small number of people who worshipped there and by charitable donations. In about three years the existing churchyard would be full and the church would no longer be able to carry out burials there. A piece of land had been gifted to the church in order to extend the churchyard. A trust fund set up for the purpose of maintaining the churchyard could be used to afford the roughly £10,000 it would cost for surveys, planning permission and groundworks to enable the land to be used for burials. However, as the church could not afford to maintain its current churchyard, it was unlikely that it would consider it possible to maintain a new churchyard as well and therefore it could decide to close the churchyard and turn it over to the local council to maintain. This year, the church benefice had to close the churchyard at Shepreth, due to high water levels making legal burials impossible. The level of distress and pain this caused residents who were no longer able to be buried with their relatives was very upsetting. The annual cost of grass cutting in the churchyard was about £1,700 and if the church didn't receive help it may be forced to use the Gifford Fund for maintenance and thus lose any opportunity of being able to extend the churchyard for later generations.

The church warden, Karen Butler-Clark, added that she understood the Parish Council's legal position and explained that the church would like to work together with the Parish Council to find an imaginative solution to assist the church.

A local resident raised concern about the proposed cost of engaging a project manager/quantity surveyor for the playground and community space project and asked how the cost could be justified. She asked if the project could be scaled down, stating that the scale of the project was overambitious and pretentious. She explained that children did

not need a built sensory garden as children would find sensory engagement in their environment in any event. She also raised concern about who would bear the ongoing maintenance cost. Responses to residents' concerns can be seen under item 14.

It was noted that there were three Parish Council vacancies with a proposal for co-option for one vacancy at this meeting.

3. Members Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda – none

4. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 1 August 2022

Proposed Chris Herriot, seconded Peter Tye. All agreed. Caroline Ilott signed the minutes.

5. Matters arising from these minutes:

- Cllr Hobro had discussed the proposed lighting column with Susan Van der Ven of the A10 cycling group. Although not sure of budget availability, Susan supported the proposal. Cllr Hobro had also spoken to Emma Murden at Cambridgeshire County Council about the need for a lighting column – a response is awaited.
- Cllr Hobro had found a poster, produced and endorsed by Network Rail, that could be used to encourage drivers to switch off engines at the Foxton level crossing and asked if the poster could be displayed near the level crossing. It was noted that the poster would need to be displayed further back from the level crossing to give notice to queuing cars. Geoff Barnes will contact the rail community group about this and the poster will be put in the Laurentian and on Facebook.
- The Clerk had completed all actions except (i) a response from MAYD after their next meeting is awaited and (ii) contact with UKPN re grid supply has been put on hold.

Action all

- Provide photo and short bio to clerk for website

Action Cllr James Hobro

- Feedback from County Council on lighting column at Foxton Bottom.
- Feedback on percentage of staff working in the office.

Action Cllr Petr McDonald

- Ask County Council Highways about putting up Network Rail poster near the level crossing.
- Update on remedial work on pavements at St Laurence Road, Rowlands Close and West Hill Road.
- Update on This Land pre-application for old school site and request site maintenance/ tree felling
- Request accident data for Foxton Bottom and look into proposal to install a 20mph limit

Action Colin Reynolds

- Follow up slanting damaged post at A10 junction with County Council highways.

- Prepare an information notice re switching engines off at the level crossing for publication on Facebook and in the Laurentian

Action Geoff Barnes

- Contact rail group about Network rail poster re switching engines off
- Attend the MAYD meeting in Melbourn (20 September at 9.30am) and online police meeting (Wed 5th October 7pm), enquire about a Police group village, face to face, public meeting
-

Action Deborah Roberts and Peter Tye

- Research skate park grants for remedial/ updating work.

Action Deborah Roberts

- Provide a list of local businesses that could be approached for donations to S106 play/ community space project.

Action Pierre Redelinghuys

- Provide a list of tenants of the Burlington Press site that could be approached for donations to S106 play/ community space project.

Action Peter Tye

- Speak to the village warden about undergoing inspection training, provide form report and request weekly playground and skate park inspection reports.

Action Clerk

- Network rail poster re switching off engines to the Laurentian and on Facebook
- Share information on the new Greater Cambridge Planning website and community chest grants on FB, website and in the Laurentian
- Circulate information about planning training
- Submit response to Call for Sites survey
- Respond to the resident re proposed Maypole community event

6. Co-option of candidate for Parish Council vacancy

a. Candidate for Parish Council vacancy is invited to speak and there will be an opportunity for questions from the Parish Council

It was explained that although Deborah Roberts lived in Fowlmere, she was entitled to stand as a Parish Councillor for Foxton as she lived within three miles of the parish area.

Deborah Roberts was invited to speak and explained that it was nice to be back at a meeting of Foxton Parish Council. Deborah explained that she had spent thirty-two years of her life supporting Foxton as well as other villages she had represented as a district councillor and that she was passionate about the job, Foxton and its residents. She had been made to feel very welcome at Foxton and admired the good community feeling in the village. Deborah explained her background working as a district councillor at SCDC and her appointment, often to senior positions, on mainstream committees such as planning, housing and licensing. Deborah had tried hard to attend all Foxton Parish Council meetings during the last thirty-two years and missed very few meetings. She hoped this showed her time commitment to the village. Deborah

noted that the Parish Council was an active council and short of two councillors. Deborah explained that she could help the Parish Council with its work load on the many projects it had. Deborah said that she would love to be able to help the village again.

It was noted that Deborah was also a parish councillor for Fowlmere and was asked whether she would be able to manage to work for two parishes. Deborah explained that whilst she was district councillor (until May this year), she was able to attend meetings of four parish councils in her ward. In addition, Deborah was on the SCDC planning committee, chairing the licencing committee and often attending full day meetings and training. Deborah explained that she was used to being busy.

Deborah was advised that Foxton Parish Council use separate gmail accounts for Parish Council business and that it was important for emails to be responded to in a timely manner (within 48 hours if possible). It was also explained that the Parish Council was non-political, both in meetings and when using Facebook for Parish Council business.

Motion to exclude Public and Press: Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed in the following agenda item b:

Proposed Caroline Ilott, seconded Chris Herriot. All agreed.

- b. Consideration of candidate the meeting will be closed to the public for a short discussion about the candidate by the Parish Council. Members of the public, including the candidate, are invited to re-join the meeting after 5 minutes.**

The meeting was closed to the public for a short discussion about the candidate by the Parish Council. Members of the public, including the candidate, were invited to re-join the meeting after 5 minutes.

3 members of the public including Deborah Roberts returned to the meeting.

- c. Vote and resolution on co-option of candidate for Parish Council vacancy**

Caroline Ilott nominated Deborah Roberts as a member of Foxton Parish Council.

Proposed Caroline Ilott, seconded Peter Tye. All agreed.

Deborah Roberts joined the meeting in a non-voting capacity. The declaration of acceptance will be signed after the meeting.

7. County Councillor's Report – see written report Appendix 1

Cllr. McDonald noted that under the GCP proposal for an enhanced bus service in 2023, the Foxton service was guaranteed to continue.

In relation to the congestion charge proposal for Cambridge, Cllr McDonald noted that this proposal would be going out to consultation and it was proposed that there would be exemptions for the low paid. Travel to the Addenbrookes site should be exempt. The proposal was already being trialled in Oxford and it was to be seen whether it reduced traffic in the city to allow bus connections.

Design work on Foxton's LHI application had begun. It was hoped that County Council Highways would accept Foxton's Facebook, website and Laurentian article as the informal consultation so that the formal consultation process could begin.

Cllr McDonald explained that he would be walking the pavements at St Laurence Road, Hall Close and West Hill Road and would take photos. There was still remedial work to be done before the work could be signed off as complete.

A parish councillor noted that the congestion charge proposal could have serious consequences and there were two petitions running against it.

Cllr McDonald was asked for an update on the development of the old school site owned by this Land on Station Road as it had been over a year since any plans or applications were brought forward and whether This Land could be asked again to maintain the site. There was an evergreen tree which a tree surgeon has advised should be felled. Cllr. McDonald explained that This Land had submitted a new pre-planning application but that he had not seen the details of this yet.

Cllr McDonald was asked if smaller hopper buses would be used on village roads. Cllr. McDonald advised that the buses would be smaller than the double decker buses and over half of these would be electric.

Cllr. McDonald was asked whether a 20mph zone could be implemented by Foxton Bottom as this was a dangerous corner and a potential accident spot. It was explained that there had been an increase in people walking and cycling along the cycleways at this location and there had been some near misses and the area had been considered for black spot registration at one stage. Cllr. McDonald explained that there would be an update on the 20mph roll out this year after the October committee meeting and he would request incident data at this location.

8. District Councillor's Report – see written report Appendix 2

The Clerk will share information on the new Greater Cambridge Planning website and community chest grants on FB, website and in the Laurentian.

A councillor asked what proportion of staff were working in the office, post covid, and asked whether it was acceptable that staff worked a 4-day week, suggesting that increasing staff remuneration for a 5-day week could support staff retention and recruitment. Cllr. Hobro explained that there was evidence that productivity increased whilst staff worked at home during covid and working from home productivity depended on the type of job and job management. Cllr. Hobro added that the trial scheme would be assessed in terms of delivery and it would not be implemented if the trial showed a reduction in the quality of service.

9. Approve representation for police, MAYD and rail

Geoff Barnes had not been able to attend meetings for police/ MAYD and the rail group for personal reasons and it was asked whether any other councillor could assist with these matters. Geoff Barnes explained that he was making arrangements so that he could attend these meetings and answer emails from these sectors/groups. Geoff Barnes will continue to represent police, MAYD and rail and will attend online MAYD and police meetings and complete the MAYD doodle poll regarding future meeting dates. Geoff

will also ask the police whether it would be possible to organise a group village face to face meeting for local residents.

A local village, jointly funded police officer to primarily serve the local villages was suggested for future consideration. It was also suggested that SCDC could allocate one of their empty village properties to a newly qualified police officer, to serve the nearby villages.

10. Any Planning, Infrastructure, R&A, S106 and Police updates will be provided in writing if not included as a separate agenda item

Reports had been circulated. It was noted that restating of the Planning Committee with new terms of reference would be considered at the October Parish Council meeting and the clerk would circulate information about planning training.

Cllr McDonald left the meeting.

11. Infrastructure

a. Approve response to Green Call for Sites - deadline 12 September 2022

SCDC had provided additional details on sites submitted in the First Proposals Consultation June 2022 and additional information could be submitted by applicants via the Parish Council and Resident Association Survey by 12 September 2022. A draft response, with further ecological and design input from a local resident with this expertise, had been circulated. It was agreed for the clerk to submit this response. Proposed Caroline Ilott, seconded Chris Herriot. All agreed.

Cllr Hobro left the meeting.

12. Planning Committee Report and applications: Reference: 22/03380/HFUL 5 High Street, Foxton

Solar panels

<https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/PLAN/22/03380/HFUL>

It was noted that the Greater Cambridge Conservation team had not supported this application due to the proximity to a listed building. Councillors supported this environmental initiative with one adding that the panels should be installed with care.

It was agreed to submit the following comment on this application:

Foxton Parish Council recommends approval.

Proposed Peter Tye, seconded Chris Herriot. All agreed.

13. R&A

a. Skate Park repairs, insurance cover and weekly checks

It was explained that the skate park was built under the lead of the Parish Council and was included on the Parish Council's asset register and insurance. The skate park was built on RGT land. A ROSPA inspection report dated 30 May 2022 had noted remedial work required but had not stated that the park needed to be closed for any safety reasons.

It was explained that it had been difficult to find contractors that wanted to undertake the remedial work. Two quotes had been received so far and another would be sought.

The cost of remedial work could be in the region of £5k-7k and should be done as soon as possible (although one councillor suggested that it could wait until the next budget). As there was no precept budget for this work, general reserves might need to be used. It was suggested that the Parish Council should apply for grant funding. Cllr Roberts and Cllr Tye volunteered to research grants.

The clerk explained that the Parish Council's insurance had a requirement for both the playground and the skatepark to be inspected weekly by a competent person so not to invalidate the insurance cover. It had been advised that a written weekly report, with substantive information, should be submitted to the clerk (this could be by email). It was suggested that the village warden could undertake training and would be asked to provide a weekly inspection and report to the clerk from now.

Quotes for the skate park remedial work and village warden training will be brought to the October Parish Council meeting.

b. Grounds maintenance association report and football grant update and next steps

The Grounds Maintenance Association (GMA) pitch inspection had been undertaken and a report circulated to the Parish Council and sports clubs. This pitch inspection is a requirement for any Parish Council grant application to the Football Foundation. Foxton Football Club had been asked to provide a plan for maintaining the three playing areas to be included in the grant application. A meeting with the sports clubs and two parish councillors was scheduled for 8 September 2022. The GMA had confirmed that retrospective invoices for work could be submitted due to the delay in setting up the grant system and the Parish Council had received the account details. £8000 had been allocated for possible pitch remedial work this year but the formal grant application still has to be done.

c. Consider resident's suggestion for a maypole dance community event

This proposal from a local resident for a community event would be brought to the October or November Parish Council meeting for further discussion. It was suggested that the school could be asked to be involved. The clerk will respond to the resident.

14. S106 Community playground project

a. Working group recommendations including timeline for project and agreement in principle of ring fencing 11% of any grant application to Amy Corporation and FCC to be paid back under the terms and conditions of any grant to the grant providers. The 11% payback sums to come from S106 funds.

A revised plan had been circulated. The plan had been slightly changed to include different fencing and no wildflower meadow as it wouldn't work with the basketball court.

It was explained that consultation had been undertaken with the village over the last 18 months and the Parish Council continued to respond to any queries.

In response to the resident's query in the open forum, the precept would not be used to fund the project build but would need to fund ongoing maintenance which would be kept as low as possible. Local businesses would be asked for donations.

Deborah Roberts will provide a list of local businesses that could be approached for donations. Tenants of the Burlington Press site could also be approached.

Donations will be sought from FCC and AMEY as agreed at the last Parish Council meeting. It was agreed, in principle, to ring fence 11% of grant funds received as these would need to be repaid to the grant funding bodies (for government purposes). The repayment would not be approved until the actual cost was brought to a Parish Council meeting for consideration and the funding and associated costs would be carefully monitored. Proposed Caroline Ilott, seconded Chris Herriot. All agreed.

The proposed project timetable was as follows:

Tender documents will be sent out early to mid-October as grant applications need to be made by the end of November (the grant window closes at the end of December). Results of the grant applications should be received in February next year. A three-month build would then be scheduled for April/ May 2023.

b. Approve S106 project manager and quantity surveyor fee £13,800 and appointment contract.

A works costing schedule and a fixed fee quote of £13800 +VAT for Alistair Russell of Ian Sayer & Co, for the project management and quantity surveying of the S106 playground and community space project, had been circulated.

It was explained that this fee was very reasonable at 4% of overall cost compared to other researched costs (surveyors could charge between 8-12% and a project manager could charge up to 15% of overall cost). The fee would be paid on a sliding scale depending on work completed. Initial costing and tendering work would have to be paid for (approx. £2-2.5k), but further payment would only be made if the project received grant funding and completed.

It was proposed to accept the revised plan for the play area and community project, the costing schedule and the professional fee of Alistair Russell. Proposed Caroline Ilott, seconded Chris Herriot. All agreed.

It was agreed to ring fence £13,800 of S106 money for Alistair Russell's fees.

It was agreed to formally appoint Alistair Russell and to sign and return the RICS appointment form. Proposed Caroline Ilott, seconded Chris Herriot. All agreed.

Alistair Russell will be asked to start drafting the tender document which will need to follow the SCDC tendering process. The draft tender will be circulated and brought to a Parish Council meeting for approval (this may need to be an extra ordinary meeting solely for this purpose).

Proposed Caroline Ilott, seconded Chris Herriot. All agreed.

It was noted by one councillor that employing the services of a project manager/ quantity surveyor should save money in the long run as all costs would be checked and managed.

c. Approve set up of online payment system for fun run and future donations

A report had been circulated comparing online payment options and costs.

On Sunday 30 October there will be a fun run for village children. Money will be raised through sponsorship rather than entry fees as this was thought not to be a fair or equitable charge, particularly at this challenging time. As such, an online payment system for the fun run was not needed. The main purpose of the fun run was to show community support and cohesion for the play area and community space project to support the grant funding applications. Online payments could be used for local business donations and would be considered at a future meeting.

d. SCDC Procurement training 21 September 2022, 7pm

SCDC procurement training will be provided to councillors and the clerk and will advise how tenders should be evaluated.

15. Finance

a. S137 grant requests

i. Grave yard grass cutting (NALC advise this is prohibited by law)

NALC legal guidance and the opinion of Church Care had been circulated. The clerk explained the NALC guidance, the audit process and the S137 power to make charitable donations. A decision on this item was postponed until October to allow more time to consider the church's financial position, village needs, legal advice and budget. The clerk will recirculate the legal advice and legislation.

ii. Contribution for a village Christmas tree

The Parish Council was asked if it could permit and insure a Christmas tree on the village green for the benefit of the village and provide a grant of £50 towards Christmas tree lights. The tree would be sourced and managed by the Christmas tree committee. A decision on this item was postponed until October to allow time to investigate the insurance and budget position.

b. Approval of quotes:

i. Informal football and goal surface (S106) – revised quotes. Consider applying for Queen's Jubilee Sport England grant.

The Parish Council previously approved quotes from Shelford Trees and Calloo for the goal, installation and surfacing at a total cost of £4188+VAT to be paid from the £90K ring fenced S106 funds, however the artificial ground surfacing chosen was not suitable.

Quotes to be considered:

Removal of 4 Leylandii trees: Quote A £700+VAT; quote B £785+VAT

Grass surface: Quote A £2370.73+VAT; quote B £2273.25+VAT, Quote C £2750+VAT

*Football goal: Quote A (socketed) £1849.44 inc VAT and installation, Quote B (socketed) £1644.94 inc VAT and installation, Quote C (weighted freestanding) £1457.99 inc VAT. Professional installation of football goal: £985+VAT
Total cheapest cost for tree removal, surfacing and football goal: £4664.99+VAT*

A decision on this item was postponed until October as Ian Francis, who was leading this project, was not in attendance.

c. Approval of payments

The bank reconciliation and bank statements were reviewed and approved by Chris Herriot.

The following payments were approved. Proposed Caroline Ilott, seconded Chris Herriot. All agreed.

Receipts

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1. Cambridgeshire County council grass cutting contribution | £810.18 |
| Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | |

Payments

Payments made (prior agreed)

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 2. Salary (SO) - LGA 1972 s112 | £1000.00 |
| 3. Pension - LGA 1972 s112, s111 | £35.77 |
| 4. Google Ireland Gmail - LGA 1972 s111, s142 | £36.20 |
| 5. Opus Unmetered street lights - Parish Councils Act 1957, s3; Highways Act 1980 s301 | £99.58 inc VAT |
| 6. Opus Metered street lights - Parish Councils Act 1957, s3; Highways Act 1980 s301 | £13.73 inc VAT |
| 7. Caroline Ilott compound keys - Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £12.00 |
| 8. DP Garden Works - Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £605.00 |
| 9. PKF Little John external audit - LGA 1972 s111 | £360.00 inc VAT |
| 10. Foxton Village Hall meeting room hire - LGA 1972 s111 | £28.45 |
| 11. Peter Evans village warden duties - Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £157.50 |
| 12. The Tank Shop water bowser- Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £372.00 inc. VAT |

Payments to be authorised

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Parish Clerk Salary, phone and home allowance | £204.70 |
| LGA 1972 s112/ LGA 1972 s111 | |
| 2. HMRC NI/ tax - LGA 1972 s112/ LGA 1972 s111 | £162.47 |
| 3. Parish Clerk Expenses – July (mileage) - LGA 1972 s111 | £11.52 |
| 4. Shelford Tree Service Ltd tree pruning - Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £720.00 inc VAT |
| 5. Cambridge Thatching Services Dovecote thatch report | £60 inc VAT |
| LGA 1972 s111/ Public Health Act 1875, s164 | |
| 6. Foxton Cricket Club August grass cutting - Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £350.00 |
| 7. SW Gardens grass cutting August (1) - Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £175.00 |
| 8. Peter Evans village warden duties - Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £157.50 |
| 9. Insurance premium added cover | £12.47 |
| LGA 1972 s111 | |
| 10. Lloyds Bank Treasurers Account top up - LGA 1972 s111 | £372.00 |

Payments received after agenda published

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1. Foxton Village Hall meeting room hire - LGA 1972 s111 | £40.70 |
| 2. Barnes Garden Maintenance- Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £40.00 |
| 3. SW Gardens grass cutting August (2) - Open Spaces Act 1906 s9-10 | £175.00 |

*Local Government Act

16. Ideas on how to improve communication and engagement with the parish

Parish Councillors were asked to provide photos and a short bio for the website if they were happy to do so. It was suggested that this may improve recognition and the level of engagement with the community and improve the Parish Council's prospects of recruiting additional councillors. Some concern was raised about publicising personal details and attracting personal/ press attention.

It was suggested to include a link to the Parish Council website in all Facebook posts. Pierre Redelinghuys will prepare a revised advert for new parish councillors to include in the Laurentian and on Facebook and the website.

17. Items for next agenda**18. Date and time of Parish Council Meeting: Monday 3 October 2022 at 7.30pm**

The meeting closed at 10.10pm.



Annabel Wright
Foxton Parish Clerk
8 September 2022

Appendix 1

County Councillor Report September 2022

Cost of living Support (click on title for link)

This mirrors the South Cambs information and also to be updated regularly.

GCP Proposals for Bus Services Improvement & Congestion Charge (click on title for link)

The GCP has published their proposals for enhanced bus service and a Cambridge congestion charge. It includes bus improvements (hourly services in our villages where they don't exist) and £1 & £2 fares and a congestion charge of £5 in 2025 in peak hours and a 7am to 7pm charge in 2026/27 to pay for this.

Great Chesterford Hardcore Site : ESS/20/22/UTT

This was eventually refused by officers and Enforcement Action is being taken.

Highways IT system

The Council will tender for a new Insight system which includes the Highways reporting tool.

Local Highways Improvement updates

Installation of gateway features, signs/ lines and 40mph buffer zones & 2 MVAS – design work commenced. Design approved by applicant. Next stage formal consultation.

Foxton Hub

I'm still waiting for an update from GCP and draft papers for the hub.

Businesses Sought for Home Energy Improvements

Businesses specialising in home energy improvements are being invited to apply to join a new bank of council-endorsed traders.

Those who are successful will be called upon to carry out energy retrofit works in homes across Cambridgeshire using government funding. Example of the works include improving energy efficiency and/or replacing older or inefficient heating systems with new low carbon heating options such as air source heat pumps.

They will also have the licence to operate under the trusted council-backed 'Action on Energy Cambridgeshire' branding. This will allow people who own their homes, but who are not eligible for government-funded schemes, to access traders appointed to the scheme for work that they pay for themselves.

The idea is that this accreditation will give householders more confidence in work carried out.

CERP - a collaboration between the county council, Cambridge City Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council – has already secured £6.5million under the Government's Sustainable Warmth schemes to spend on home improvements to those Cambridgeshire properties with the poorest energy rating.

With further rounds of funding expected from government up to 2025, Cambridge City Council, on behalf of CERP, is seeking contractors for a four-year framework to deliver the works.

It will enable all members of the partnership to call on a bank of endorsed traders when government funding is secured to carry out energy efficiency improvements including insulation, solar PV, heat pumps and double/triple glazing to people's homes.

Peter McDonald
Sep 3rd 2022

Appendix 2

District Councillor Report August 2022

Councillor James Hobro

District Councillor for the parishes of Foxton, Fowlmere, Heydon, Great Chishill & Little Chishill.

I am always happy to hear from residents with any questions about these or other issues relating to the District Council. Please contact me by telephone on 07768 706670 or by email at cllr.hobro@scambs.gov.uk.

Planning Compliance: Refreshed website

As part of the wider review of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, officers have been reviewing the part of the service relating to ensuring compliance with planning controls. This review is particularly required because of the rise in the number of complaints received, which reflects a national trend, and the need to respond efficiently and effectively whilst keeping informed those who are involved. Our strategy is to promote a proactive approach to responding to breaches of planning regulations with appropriate interventions. Therefore, we have moved to the use of the term compliance. In the last six months' work has been undertaken to examine existing processes, to streamline them, adopt new IT systems to aid reporting, and to improve the information available on these matters.

In relation to information available to residents, all the information on compliance with planning regulations has now been updated and consolidated onto one page within the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service website with links available from the Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils websites. There is written guidance on what is (and what is not) a breach of planning control, as our experience is that many do not understand that some building works are able to take place without the need for planning permission to be granted. In addition, there is a helpful, explanatory video. Where it appears that there is a breach of planning control, complaints can now be submitted using an e-form. This allows any documents and/or photographs to be uploaded which will help the compliance team with their investigations.

We hope that this will enable residents and others to understand the issues involved in securing compliance with planning regulations. We continue to seek improvements to the way we respond to complaints about unauthorised developments with the development of a new Enforcement Plan and restructuring of the Compliance Team. If you have any questions, please contact Project Manager (Enforcement) - New Communities and Planning - Mike Holmes.

Community Chest grants (click on link)

The District Council offers Community Chest grants of up to £2000 to local non-profit organisations for improvements to community buildings, repairs to historic monuments, funding costs for community projects, and biodiversity improvements. These are considered for funding on a monthly basis.

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme

On 2 August the government announced further funding to upgrade public buildings in England with low carbon heating and energy efficiency measures. Up to £635 million of government funding will be made available to public sector organisations so they can

install low carbon heating, such as heat pumps, and energy efficiency measures including double glazing and loft insulation. The funding is available through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme with organisations such as councils, NHS Trusts and schools able to apply for grants from September.

[Announcement](#) (click on link)

Local Covid Commemoration survey launched

On 28 July the UK Commission on Covid Commemoration launched a survey to collate information on commemoration activities across the UK. The UK Commission on Covid Commemoration was established on 21 July to secure a broad consensus from across the whole of the United Kingdom on how we commemorate the COVID-19 outbreak and mark this distinctive period in our history at a national and community level. As part of its work, the Commission is keen to hear about existing and planned Covid commemoration activities across the United Kingdom. Councils are encouraged to complete the short survey below to inform the Commission of Covid commemoration activities in their area. This could include activities such as the opening of a memorial garden or an event to say thank you to those involved in the response.

[Announcement](#)

[Survey](#) (click on links)

Safer Streets Fund update

The Home Secretary, Rt Hon Priti Patel MP, announced earlier this week that £50 million funding will be given to communities in England and Wales to make the streets safer. The money will go to councils, police forces, British Transport Police and eligible community groups in England and Wales to prevent violence against women and girls in public, neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour. The projects will be able to roll out extra CCTV and streetlighting in their communities and expand work to change attitudes and behaviours and prevent these crimes happening in the first place. The Home Office has added a list of the successful bids for the Safer Streets Fund round four.

[Announcement](#) (click on link)

Energy Bills Support Scheme and Household Support Fund update

On 29 July the government set out further details of the Energy Bills Support Scheme to support households this winter. The £400 discount, administered by energy suppliers, will be paid to consumers over six months with payments starting from October, to ensure households receive financial support throughout the winter months. The government has also announced that 8.9 million grants have been given to families in the first round of Household Support Fund. Councils administer the fund on behalf of the government to help households access support to help with the rising costs of energy, food, water and other related essentials.

[Announcement 1](#) and [Announcement 2](#)

[Explainer](#) (click on links)

Four-day working week trial proposed for 2023

A three-month trial of a four-day week could begin in January for desk-based staff at South Cambridgeshire District Council – as a similar pilot of over 3,300 staff continues at more than 70 UK organisations. Experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic mean people now think differently about work-life priorities; nationally and locally it is harder than ever to recruit and retain staff.

Service quality metrics would be monitored carefully during the trial. These keep a check on things like how long it takes the Council to process benefits claims, Council house rent collections, how fast planning applications are determined, staff turnover, call answering times and more. As part of the trial, the Council would also look to extend the hours that it is open to the public via a soon-to-be-launched webchat service or Teams / Zoom meetings.

For more than a year, the Council has only been able to fill around eight out of every ten (or fewer) of its vacancies. Between January and March 2022, only around half were filled. There are currently 23 agency staff covering office-based roles, which should ideally be filled by people in permanent positions. Over a whole year, these agency staff could cost the Council more than £2million. If the Council filled all these posts with permanent staff, it would only cost around £1million per year.

The proposals that will be discussed at the Council's Cabinet meeting on Monday 12 September 2022 recommend that a three-month trial for desk-based staff takes place between January and March 2023.

Numerous studies and trials by large companies such as Microsoft in Japan and Buffer in the USA have shown that a four-day week increases productivity.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/trial-of-four-day-working-week-proposed-to-assess-viability-for-council/>