

# CALDECOTE PARISH COUNCIL

(South Cambridgeshire District)

## MINUTES

**A meeting of this Council was held in the Village Hall, Caldecote  
On Thursday 3rd February 2022.**

*Members of the public are reminded that copies of reports and supporting documentation for agenda items can be obtained from the Parish Council website, <http://caldecote.gov.uk> or upon request to the Parish Clerk.*

**Present:** Cllr Polly Field (PF, Chairman), Cllr John Barker (JB), Cllr and District Cllr Tumi Hawkins (TH), Cllr Priya Nair (PN) and Cllr Sharon Pedley (SP) and Cllr Nicola Pritchard (NP).

**In Attendance:** Alan Melton (Parish Clerk), Katy Reeves (Deputy Clerk).

There was one member of the public present.

1. **Public open forum** – There were no questions from the public
2. **Apologies for absence** – Apologies were received from Cllr Jack Lang (JL).
3. **Members’ declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests** – There were no declarations of interests.
4. **Chairman’s Announcements** – The Chairman thanked Mr and Mrs Claridge for registering to represent the Parish Council at the Planning Committee meeting to discuss the Linden Homes planning application.
5. **Minutes of the last Meeting** – Two amendments to the minutes of the Council meeting held on 6th January 2022 were proposed: to correct the venue to “the Village Hall, Caldecote” and to correct the final statement under agenda item 11 to read “Cllr T Hawkins abstained from the vote and registered her objection to the decision-making process as the Councillors were not provided with the quotes and supporting documentation” (removing the words ‘ahead of the meeting’). The minutes, as amended, were approved as a correct record and duly signed by Cllr P Field.
6. **Actions**
  - **Social Media Policy** – It was agreed that the revised policy should be compared to the Standing Orders before adoption. The Deputy Clerk will circulate the current Standing Orders to all Councillors ahead of the next meeting.
  - **Emergency Planning** – There were no updates
  - **Speed Restrictions** – There were no updates
  - **Drainage to Tennis Courts** – The Clerk reported that it will be necessary to ask an engineer to look at the problem and possible solutions.
7. **Report from District Councillor and County Councillor**

District Cllr T Hawkins provided a monthly report (attached). Key points included:

  - Information on the recently launched Water Resources East consultation – all residents are invited to respond.
  - Notice of two upcoming Planning training sessions for Parish Councillors to be run by the District Council and a recommendation that the Parish Council send representatives to each session.

County Cllr M Atkins provided a monthly report (attached).

## 8. Planning Applications

- [21/05053/HFUL](#): Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and internal alterations. At, 1 Copse Close, Highfields, Caldecote.

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to the application. Cllr T Hawkins abstained from the vote.

- [21/05517/HFUL](#): Installation of timber gates and brick piers. At, 10 Bosserts Way, Highfields, Caldecote.

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to the application. Cllr T Hawkins abstained from the vote.

- [21/05680/REM](#): Reserved matters application for access, appearance, landscape and scale pursuant to outline application re: 21/00488/OUT. At, 34 East Drive, Highfields, Caldecote

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to the application. Cllr T Hawkins abstained from the vote.

- [21/00079/HFUL](#): Single storey extension At, The Fox, Main Street, Caldecote

It was **RESOLVED** to make no objection to the application. Cllr T Hawkins abstained from the vote.

## 9. Financial Reports –

- **Summary of receipts and payments.** A report on the on current budget vs. expenditure dated 28th January 2022 was received and approved.

- **Bank Reconciliation.** The bank reconciliation dated 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022 was received and approved.

- **Accounts for payment.** The schedule of payments (attached) was received. It was **RESOLVED** that the payment of bills be approved.

10. **Play Equipment - Stage 2 – Report from Chairman/ Clerk.** Cllr P Field reported that the surveyor has recommended the use of a high impact surfacing to minimise drainage problems, which has increased the total cost. It was **RESOLVED** that an order should be placed for the equipment, at a total cost of £57,675.10 + VAT. **Action: Clerk**

11. **Additional defibrillator –** The Clerk reported that Hardwick and Caldecote Cricket Club have submitted a grant request for £200 towards the cost of a mobile defibrillator, to be stored at the Sports Pavilion. It was **RESOLVED** that the grant should be approved.

12. **Report of L & A – Wednesday 19th January 2022 –** Cllr P Field reported that a meeting was held with representatives of the cricket and football clubs to discuss use of the facilities and fees. An increase in the hire fees for external clubs to £125/ day, together with an extra charge for use of the Pavilion kitchen and meeting room was proposed. The cricket club have agreed to discuss the feasibility of the proposed increase with the clubs that use the field and will report back to the Parish Council. The final increase in the fees will be decided at a future Parish Council meeting.

Cllr P Field reported that CGM are continuing to work on the village green spaces until their contract expires and are currently engaged in cutting back hedges around the village.

*Parish Clerk: Alan Melton, 20 St. Martins Road, Chatteris, Cambs PE16 6JF  
Email: [parishclerk@caldecote.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@caldecote.gov.uk)*

- 13. Pavilion Café – Summer 2022** – It was agreed that permission be granted to Cllr P Field to use the Pavilion to run the café throughout the Easter and Summer Holidays.
- 14. The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee** – The Chairman reported that a committee of volunteers has been set up with the aim of holding a village event to mark the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. Plans include a parade, picnic, stalls and house decorating. It has been proposed that the Caldecote Journal will release an issue that includes advertising to fund the event and other sources of funding (including a grant from the Parish Council) will be sought once a full proposal has been prepared. Cllr Field and the organizing committee were asked to complete a Grant Request Form.
- 15. Correspondence** – The Clerk reported that he has received correspondence from the District Council with information on two upcoming Planning training sessions. It was agreed that Cllrs P Nair, J Barker and N Pritchard will attend the session on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

Correspondence was received from Communities at SCDC asking for nominations for individuals to attend a County Day. Cllrs were asked to send any nominations to the Clerk as soon as possible.

The deadline for articles to be included in the next Caldecote Journal is 10<sup>th</sup> February. It was agreed that the Clerk will submit an article with some information about the Parish Council’s responsibilities and activities. **Action: Clerk**

Correspondence was received from the East West Rail Company inviting the Parish Council to join a local representatives group. It was agreed that Cllr N Pritchard, Cllr P Field and Cllr J Barker will attend the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

**16. Councillor Reports–**

Cllr N Pritchard asked for an update on Councillor training. The Clerk reported that this will be arranged after the election.

Cllr N Pritchard asked whether the pavement improvements on Highfields Road between Grafton Drive and Bosserts Way are to be continued further up the village. Cllr T Hawkins reported that Balfour Beatty have now completed their section of the work and that Linden Homes will be carrying out improvements at the top of the village. The central section is the responsibility of the County Council. Cllr T Hawkins agreed to enquire about the funding from Cala Homes that was transferred to the County Council to pay for some of this work.

Cllr P Nair reported that the Junction at which the part of Blythe Way that serves as the entrance to Woodfield/ Brookfield Road meets the main part of Blythe Way is hazardous, due to cars parking on the road and poor visibility and asked whether anything could be done to address the situation. It was noted that this issue was identified by the Parish Council during the planning process but was not considered a problem by Highways. It was recommended that the Management Company for Woodfield/ Brookfield Road be asked to discuss the issue with the Highways Department of the County Council.

Cllr S Pedley raised the issue of mud on Highfields Road from the development on Grafton Drive. It was agreed that this will be raised at the Liaison Meeting and Cllr Pedley was asked to provide some photographs if possible.

Cllr T Hawkins reported that she has received a complaint about dog fouling in play areas and on paths and verges. Councillors agreed that this was an ongoing issue. Cllr

Hawkins suggested that residents be asked for any suggestions about how the problem could be addressed and that the Parish Council investigate the possibility of implementing fines.

Cllr P Field asked for nominations of individuals in the village who could be recognized for their activities and achievements at a awards ceremony as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebration. These should be sent to the Clerk or Deputy Clerk.

- 17. Dates and times of the next meeting – Thursday 3rd March 2022, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall**

**The Meeting Closed at 8.25 pm**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS:** to consider and approve the schedule of payments. \* = cost incurred as a result of vandalism.

Key to Frequency (Freq) codes:

**O** = 'one-off' or intermittent regular payment with no set frequency.

**T** = Termly (usually associated with youth club payments which get invoiced on a termly basis) **A** = Annually. **M** = Monthly. **Q** = Quarterly.  $\frac{1}{2}$  = Half-Yearly.

**Payments made since last meeting that require Council approval**

Payment date	Voucher #	Amount	To	For	Budget Code	Freq
10/01/22	172	92.64	BT	Pavilion broadband	38	M
10/01/22	176	60.30	P. Field	Microwave	40	O
17/01/22	178	10.00	Nicola Pritchard	Community support phone	34	M
18/01/22	179	105.11	British Gas	Pavilion electricity	36	M
19/01/22	180	35.00	Information commission	ICO registration	16	A
21/01/22	181	50.54	E-on	Cabin electricity	45	M
26/01/22	185	350.74	HMRC	PAYE Jan 2022	33	M
26/01/22	182-184	1460.18	Staff salaries	Salaries Jan 2022	27,28,29	M

**New payments yet to be made requiring Council approval**

Amount	To	For	Budget Code	Freq
19.50	Katy Reeves	Expenses Jan 22	6	M
242.25	Alan Melton	Expenses Jan 22	5	M

**South Cambridgeshire District Council – Caldecote Ward**  
(comprises the Parishes of Caldecote, Childerley, Kingston, Bourn, Longstowe & Little Gransden)

**Councillor's Monthly Report – February 2022**

This report of previous month events is for all the Ward, so please be aware that some of the content may not be relevant to your particular Parish.

---

**General**

Please contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. These are housing need, housing repairs for council tenants, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection, environmental health issues etc. Don't fight on your own. I am available to help you to get the best outcome possible for your situation.

Check out articles on my facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/itsCouncillorTumi> and my blog <http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk>. What I post on there is my view and not LibDem or South Cambs official policy unless I state that it is.

**COVID19 UPDATE**

**Government eases restrictions**

Restrictions to limit the spread of Omicron variant have been eased. It is no longer compulsory to wear a face mask, and people are being encouraged to go back to the office to work. However, it is strongly recommended that people continue to wear face coverings on public transport and enclosed spaces, and follow the simple guidance Hands-Face-Space-Fresh Air..

On 28 January the UK Health Security Agency published the latest reproduction number (R) and growth rate of COVID-19 in England. The R value is currently between 0.7 and 0.9 in England meaning that, on average, every 10 people infected will infect between 7 and 9 other people. The growth rate is currently between -6% and -2% which means that the number of new infections could be broadly flat, shrinking by up to between 6% and 2% every day.

Please get vaccinated, take a free rapid lateral flow test before going out to crowded places to ensure you are unlikely to spread the virus. Pick up home test kits from pharmacies and libraries, order online. [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/rapidtesting](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/rapidtesting)

**Study shows positivity rates highest ever recorded, but prevalence plateauing**

On 26 January, Imperial College London and Ipsos MORI published the findings from the latest report of REACT-1, one of the country's largest studies into COVID-19 infections in England. Findings covering 5 to 20 January indicate that prevalence of COVID-19 was 4.41%, by far the highest figure recorded since the beginning of the study, and over threefold higher than the prevalence observed for the period 23 November to 14 December. This means that around 1 in 23 people were infected with COVID-19.

**Greater Cambridge Local Plan – First Proposals Consultation – Thank You**

I recently wrote an article published in the Cambridge Independent to thank residents and businesses for taking part in the First Proposals Consultation. I also set out the facts to correct some of the misrepresentations some had been making about the emerging local plan. This new plan is adding 11,640 on 19 new sites to the sites already allocated in the current adopted Local Plans

---

2018. You can read the article at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/green-planning-proposals-protectsvillages/>. Feel free to leave a comment or ask me questions of clarification.

*District Councillor Tumi*

### **Chalk Stream Project**

As we know, our chalk streams are very special and precious to the natural environment in our region. They form part of the water supply for our area and are in need of help to restore and protect them. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service (GCSP) submitted a funding bid to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). The CPCA board agreed to provide £420,000 towards this work. We are keen to do our bit, along with other bodies such as the Environment Agency and Water companies who have the statutory responsibility for water supply. You can find out more at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/support-for-chalk-stream-project/>

### **Water Resources East (WRE) – Informal Consultation**

On 17 January 2022, WRE launched an informal consultation on its Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP). This is their equivalent of our Local Plan, and it is setting out the options being considered to help meet the long term demand for water in our region up to 2050.

The emerging WRMP reveals that by 2050, the Eastern region could require around double (2,267 Ml/d) the amount of water currently used. This arises from an increasing demand for public water supply and for the agri-food and the energy sectors, alongside an increasing allocation to the natural environment, and mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change.

Read the press release at <https://wre.org.uk/wre-launches-consultation-on-emerging-waterresources-plan-for-eastern-england/>. You will find the proposals on the consultation page at <https://wre.org.uk/projects/the-regional-plan/>.

If you are concerned about water issues, then please take part in this consultation. It closes on 28 February 2022.

### **Fly Tipping**

The incidents of fly tipping are increasing in the district. SCDC continues to advice residents and businesses to dispose of their waste correctly. Always check the credentials of anyone who you engage to dispose of your waste. If it is to provide a skip or get rid of waste, always use a registered waste carrier. You can check the Waste Carriers register on the Environment Agency website at <https://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/view/search-waste-carriers-brokers>

You can be fined up to £400 if your waste is found fly tipped by you or someone else. A man from Steeple Morden recently found himself in this unfortunate situation when rubbish from his address was found fly tipped in Guilden Morden. Don't let that be you. Read more on the SCDC website at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/recycling-and-bins/keeping-your-community-clean/fly-tipping/>

### **Solar Together Cambridgeshire**

SCDC is once again taking part in the Solar Together Cambridgeshire scheme in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council. The scheme operates as a group buying scheme for solar panels. Households can register their interest for solar panels – a company called iChoosr then run a reverse auction to get the most competitive price for households who receive a recommendation for their

---

house and can accept or decline the offer. To date, 411 installations have taken place in South Cambridgeshire (and that includes my home), installing 1.93 MW of Solar PV panels. The scheme launches on 7 February, but householders can register their interest now at <https://solartogether.co.uk/cambridgeshire/home>

### **Zero Carbon Events**

SCDC is delighted to invite you to the Zero Carbon Communities Team's annual series of events held to celebrate climate action taking place in the district, as well as looking at some of the things that the council is doing to mitigate and adapt to climate change in the future. Please see the details of the sessions below, including information on how to sign up.

21 February: 7pm to 8pm: Community Action in Response to the Climate Emergency  
What next after you've declared a Climate Emergency? A session with [Cambridge Carbon Footprint](#) for Parish Councils and community organisations

23 February: 7pm to 8pm: Cycling for Sustainability

Led by local campaign group [Camcycle](#), this session will explore action taking place on cycling in the district, including campaigns such as School Streets.

24 February: 1pm to 2pm: Making your business greener

This case study-based webinar hosted by our [Business Support Team](#) will feature a panel of speakers demonstrating ways businesses can operate more sustainably, reduce their carbon and waste, saving money by embracing renewable energy.

Alternatively, visit the website at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/climate-emergency-and-nature/zerocarbon-communities/zero-carbon-communities-events/> for more events including those in March.

### **LGBTQ+ History Month 2022**

The Council is currently celebrating LGBTQ+ history month, partnering with Encompass Network to bring more information on their website <http://encompassnetwork.org.uk/history-month/> to residents and businesses. There is also a series of events from webinars to theatre productions. Find out more at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/equality-anddiversity/equality-activities-and-events/>

### **Community Engagement Forums for 2022**

The dates for the community engagement forums have been set for 2022. These take place in locations where major development is planned (Bourn; Cambourne; Cambridge East; North East Cambridge; Northstowe; North West and West Cambridge; and Waterbeach). All of the forums will be held virtually on Zoom. Joining details and agendas can be found on our website no later than one week prior to the advertised date. The Forums webpage is at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/community-forums/>

The schedule of meetings for this quarter is as follows:.

- Wednesday 9 February, 6pm - North East Cambridge
- Wednesday 23 February, 6pm - Cambridge East
- Wednesday 2 March, 6pm – Waterbeach
- Wednesday 9 March, 6pm onwards - A428 Cluster: Bourn Airfield
- <https://www.scams.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/community-forums/a428development-cluster-bourn-airfield/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/events/226636826346319/>
- Wednesday 9 March, 6pm onwards - A428 Cluster: Cambourne

- 
- <https://www.scams.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/community-forums/a428development-cluster-cambourne/>
  - <https://www.facebook.com/events/7798290350196695/>
  - Wednesday 16 March, 6pm - North West and West Cambridge
  - Wednesday 23 March, 7pm – Northstowe

For information on forums, email the Communities Team [duties.communities@scams.gov.uk](mailto:duties.communities@scams.gov.uk) or call 01954 713 070.

### Highway Code changes

Department for Transport announced changes to ‘The Highway Code’ that are set to come into effect from **29 January 2022**. Heavier modes of travel (lorries, cars etc.) have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they may pose to others (cyclists, pedestrians) on the road. Cyclists will also be able to ride in the centre of a lane on quieter roads, in slower-moving traffic and at the approach to junctions in order to make themselves as clearly visible as possible.

Meanwhile, motorists will be encouraged to adopt the so-called ‘Dutch Reach’, opening the door next to them with the opposite hand so they look over their shoulder, meaning they’re less likely to injure passing cyclists and pedestrians. The government’s THINK! campaign will soon launch a communications drive, backed by over £500,000 in funding, raising awareness of the changes and ensuring road-users across the country understand their responsibilities. The campaign will run across radio and social media channels, with further campaign activity to follow later in the summer. The new updates are advisory, so non-compliance will not result in a fine.

Please see the announcements on the government webpages:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/highway-code-changes-set-to-take-effect-this-weekend>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-highway-code-8-changes-you-need-to-know-from-29january-2022>

Highway Code: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code-road-safety> Campaign: <https://www.think.gov.uk/>

### Business Support

South Cambs is offering a series of free-to-attend webinars for local businesses. The following are scheduled for this month:

- **Making your business greener** *Thursday 24 February, 1pm to 2pm*

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing the planet. Come and hear how your business can reduce its carbon use and operate more sustainably. This case-study based webinar will feature a panel including speakers from Green Blue You, PECT and Greater Cambridge Shared Waste.

To find out more and to register, go to the business webpage at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/business/business-networking-and-events/>

### Covid Business Support Grants

South Cambridgeshire businesses can now apply for the latest COVID Government support grants via the District Council. Applications opened Monday 17 January for the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant (OHLG) for up to £6,000 and the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG). These grants are primarily aimed at those businesses in the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors. Applications should be made by 18 February. Final payments will be made by 31 March 2022. Full eligibility criteria, and online application forms, can be found on South Cambridgeshire District

---

Council's website <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/business/grants-and-funding>  
Don't delay, send in your applications as allocation is on first come first served basis.

### Health and Wellbeing

The Action for Happiness theme for this month is **Friendly February**. The calendar is at <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/february>. This month's focus is on reaching out to connect with others and doing our best to be a good friend.

### Local Issues

Little Gransden: Application for Self Build Dwelling 20/05251/OUT

This application was unanimously refused at planning committee in January. I am working with Housing Officers to try and find a solution to the maintenance of Primrose Walk, as I have now established that it is owned by the District Council.

**Caldecote Liaison Meeting** – the next one is taking place on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022. We expect both Linden Homes and Balfour Beatty as well as Parish Council representatives to attend.

### Casework

Irrespective of the current Covid19 lockdown, please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. I will help as best I can.

You will find the current and past reports at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/2021-22-monthly-reports/>. Feel free to read, share and/or download.

Please stay safe. The maxim **Hands – Face – Space - Fresh Air** is still very much the rule.

*Tumi*

Tumi Hawkins  
01 February 2022

<b>Email me @:</b>	<a href="mailto:tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk">tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk</a>
<b>Read my blog at:</b>	<a href="http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk">http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk</a>
<b>Twitter:</b>	<a href="#">@CouncillorTumi</a>
<b>Facebook</b>	<a href="#">@itsCouncillorTumi</a>
<b>LinkedIn</b>	<a href="#">TumiHawkins</a>
<b>Call me on:</b>	07802 323269

---

### Notes from Area 3 Planning Meeting 14 December 2021

- Staffing continues to be challenging. There are two vacancies for officers in the team but there is hope that ongoing recruitment will result in the vacant Senior Planner position being filled.
- The Service received a high number of planning applications in November. December tends to be busy as agents try to get them in before Christmas. We expect January to be busy.
- Validation time for new applications is about 7 days, compared to target of 5 days. The case load is about 80 per officer
- Greater Cambridgeshire Local Plan: consultation ended on 13 December. All comments will be analysed and feedback provided.
- Two applications likely to go to Planning Committee in January/Feb – single dwelling in Little Gransden and Linden site major application for 74 dwellings.
- No Amendments being allowed for Planning applications since July 2021. It means agents and applicants are more careful in what they submit. It simplifies the process for officers and especially Parish councils inundated with changes they have to decipher.
- Land Charges was very busy and the time to fulfil the enquiry now down to the statutory 10 days.
- Public access database is undergoing housekeeping of addresses, so those that have not accessed it in the last 7 years are being contacted to warn them before being deleted from the system. They can always re-register going forward.
- Biodiversity SPDs (Supplementary Planning Document) consultation responses being collated so that the final document can be produced. Expected in new year.
- The Tree Officer Miriam Hill has left and her post is being advertised. Jay Patel (Tree assistant) is still in position.
- Pre-Application service was revamped and Agents/developers being encouraged to use it. A new Design Enabling Panel is starting in the new year focussing on Climate, Community, Connectivity and Character as important criteria for new applications.
- Emphasis from Cabinet Member that the Service is very keen to work collaboratively with Parish Councils. Cultivate relationship with Area Team Leaders and discuss issues/concerns with them and the Case officers.
- The Service is proposing future training for Parish Councils. PCs asked to inform the service of any areas they would like training for. Future topics could include Flooding and Highways issues
- Presentation of S106 by James Fisher, S106 Officer (Slides to be available later).
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) update -changes show government keen on ‘well-designed and beautiful homes’(whatever that means), also on green infrastructure, trees.

**Area 3 Team**

Area Manager - Lorraine Casey  
Principal Planner - Aaron Coe  
Principal Planner - Katie Christodoulides (Maternity leave)  
Senior Planner - Charlotte Peet  
Senior Planner - Charlotte Spencer  
Senior Planner - Mary Collins  
Senior Planner - Tom Gray  
Planning Officer - Sumaya Nakamya  
Planning Officer - John McAteer



---

# County Councillor Report

## Cllr Michael Atkins, Hardwick Division

### January 2022

---

#### Summary

- Covid-19: Plan A restrictions; case rates very high, particularly in children
- County Council Budget: increase in council tax, household support fund, just transition fund
- Active travel proposals: modified after resident feedback
- Traffic order: proposed change in speed limit on St Neots Rd
- 400 homes to benefit from improved energy efficiency
- Additional needs employment event
- Farm tenancies available
- Contact details

#### Covid-19

As you will be aware, we have now left 'Plan B' restrictions and returned to 'Plan A'. Residents are encouraged to: get vaccinated, including a booster; wear face coverings in crowded and enclosed spaces; let fresh air in if meeting indoors; and continue testing and self-isolating if required.

Data suggests that there are over 300 cases per day in South Cambridgeshire, with particularly high rates for 5-14 year olds (about 1 in 25 have covid). These figures are likely to be underestimates given recent changes to the testing regime. These remain some of the highest rates we have seen since the pandemic began.

From an education perspective, in the last week of January, there were approximately 3,500 cases in schools across the County, with 15% of pupils and 10% of staff absent for covid or other reasons. Some pupils are being moved to online learning where staff availability cannot be maintained. Secondary school pupils are being encouraged to wear face masks in communal areas and on home-school transport.

#### Budget highlights

The Council's budget is due to be debated on the 8<sup>th</sup> February, and the papers have recently been published. The key challenge we are facing is to stabilise finances over the short and medium term, so that services and support can be sustainably funded and not face sudden withdrawal in the future.

The Joint Administration has therefore proposed to increase 'Basic Council Tax' by 2%, in addition to a 3% 'Adult Social Care' precept increase, for a total 5% increase, or approximately £1/week increase for Band B & C households. In conjunction with an improved grant settlement from the UK government, this results in a balanced budget for 22/23; and a budget gap of £17m for 23/24, which will be the focus of budgeting work over the next twelve months.

I know that many residents will be concerned about the cost-of-living crisis, and the impact of a rise in Council Tax on top of the large increases in the cost of energy, national insurance, and other bills. The Administration is therefore also proposing to extend the Household Support Fund until at least March 2023, which will provide financial support to people in receipt of Universal Credit, and provide 'free school meal' vouchers for eligible families throughout the school holidays.

I am helping residents on a regular basis to access the support that is available, so please share my contact details with anyone who needs them.

The Administration is also creating a £14m ‘Just Transition Fund’, to be spent over the next five years on projects to tackle inequality, improve lives and care for the environment. Some of the projects planned for the coming year are improvements in flood prevention, new investment in Independent Living services, and supporting care services in local communities. I anticipate that parish councils will be able to apply for funding in the future for smaller schemes that meet the aims of the fund, and will share details when this is ready. Finally, the Administration is proposing that young people leaving the care system will receive full council tax relief until the age of 21, with discretionary targeted support available until 25, so as to give them the best chance while starting their independent adult lives, and to help them manage their financial situation. We know that many parents continue to support their children beyond 18, and so it seems only right that the Council should do the same for children leaving its care.

### **Active travel proposals**

The Active travel proposals in our area have been subject to much debate and discussion, and have now been refined. The current situation is:

- Madingley village scheme: has been changed in response to resident concerns: inverted (traffic now prohibited in EB direction), with changes to the Madingley Road/Cambridge Road junction instead of all down Cambridge Road.
- Dry Drayton village scheme: in response to resident concerns, this has been scrapped.
- M11 Bridge, Barton: will now be carried out by the Greater Cambridge Partnership, I expect alongside the Barton Greenway, but I should know more soon.
- St Neots Road, Hardwick: will now be carried out the GCP, as a forerunner to the C2C busway taking an on-road route along this section of road.

I expect that consultations on the final schemes will take place later this year. Thank you very much to everyone who participated in the consultation last year, or who contacted me directly, and as you can see, your feedback has been listened to!

### **Traffic order: St Neots Road, Hardwick**

As part of ongoing improvements to road safety, the Council is proposing to reduce the speed limit on St Neots Road (between the Madingley Road/A428 roundabout and Hardwick Village) from 60mph to 50mph. There are more details at

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/traffic-regulation-orders/permanent-traffic-regulation-orders> and any comments should be sent to [policyandregulation@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:policyandregulation@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) using reference PR0781, or to me to pass on.

### **400 homes to benefit from improved energy efficiency**

‘Action on Energy Cambridgeshire’, a collaboration between all the councils of Cambridgeshire, has received £6.5m in government funding to tackle high energy bills for households on low income. By investing in insulation, heat pumps and solar panels, residents will see reductions in their bills, as well as a positive environmental impact. To be considered, residents should contact South Cambridgeshire District Council.

### **Additional needs employment event**

The Council is running a virtual seminar on 25<sup>th</sup> March for the benefit of local employers, to explore the benefits of hiring people with disabilities, and how small adjustments in the workplace can enable potential staff with learning disabilities or neurodiverse conditions to access opportunities. If you have considered hiring people with additional needs in the past, or might do so in the future, I would urge you to sign up at

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-additional-needs-employment-event-tickets-223221330007>

**Applications open for farm holdings on County estate**

Applications are due to open for tenancy of seven holdings on the Council's estate. A total of 1,800 acres are available to potential tenants, who should be entrepreneurs looking to start a rural business, either as new or existing farmers. For more details on the available holdings, please visit: [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/rural-business-opportunities](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/rural-business-opportunities).

**Contact Details**

Councillors and residents are welcome to contact me on any issue which is concerning them:

<p>Cllr Michael I. Atkins <a href="mailto:matkinslibdem@gmail.com">matkinslibdem@gmail.com</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/cllrmichaelatkins">https://www.facebook.com/cllrmichaelatkins</a> 07968 264637</p>
---