

## APPENDIX I

### **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 29 April 2019 at 7.30p.m in the Bowl's Pavilion, Coles Road, Milton**

**Present:** J E Coston (Chair), R J Farrington, H M Smith, A Horne, D Owen, D Wildman, T Leavens, A Bradnam (arrived 7:55pm), J Rippeth (District Councillor - arrived 7:55pm)

**In attendance:** S Corder (Clerk), E Taylor (Office assistant)  
3 members of the public

- 1. Introduction by Chairman and apologies for absence:** The Chairman extended a warm welcome to everyone present at the meeting.  
Apologies: None – all present
- 2. Introduction of Parish Councillors:** The Parish Councillors introduced themselves. The Chair reported that the council now have 8 members of the 12 needed and made an appeal for new members to join.
- 3. To confirm minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 30 April 2018:**  
RF Proposed to accept the minutes - DW Seconded (TL Abstain). **AGREED.** The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on the 30 April 2018 were approved and signed.

#### **4. Chairman's Annual Report including draft accounts 2018/19**

##### **Chairman's Annual Parish Report including draft accounts 2018/19 - Jane Coston BEM**

We have had another extremely busy year. We have successfully installed £100,000 play area on Coles Road Recreation Ground, installed 3 new war memorial seats close to the war memorial, and a grit bin on school ground beside the footpath in But Lane, evicted a group of travellers who broke in and parked on football pitches at North Lodge Park, installed barriers and replaced the road access at the allotments for safety reasons as well as continuing to provide a range of services. We also were successful in getting a grant of £7,000 to fund some highway improvements and we consulted you about the A10 bridge and listened to your views. Additionally we are delighted to have been given an excellent report from our internal auditors. We are also very pleased to have been invited to apply for Five Star Status.

I hope the following will give you some idea of the sorts of activities the Parish Council are busy managing to try to ensure Milton remains a pleasant place to live.

**Mobile speed indicator** - We purchased this indicator jointly with the Parish Councils of Landbeach and Waterbeach. It is a battery operated sign and is moved by a small group of volunteers to various locations. Report received and noted: typical average speeds are 25mph and speeding rates are 1%. At village boundaries, typical average speeds are 26mph, but speeding rates are 9%. Average speeder is 38mph. Peak traffic hours are typically 7-8am and 4-5pm. Thank you to everyone who is involved

**New Play Area in Coles Road** - The new play equipment on Coles Road Recreation Ground was installed during July last year and continues to be extremely popular. We were delighted to be awarded grants and donations totalling £99,697 to cover the cost. This is a fantastic achievement and is all down to the work of a small group of volunteers - Sarah Corder, Jane Coston, Will Munns, Edel Gower, Joelle Garden and Alison McKeegan who joined the Parish Council Play Working Party in 2016. Our Clerk, Sarah Corder, also did a brilliant job gaining grants from WREN who awarded us £70,697 and Amey who awarded us £23,200 from the Amey Community Fund (both WREN and Amey are part of the Landfill Communities Fund). We also received private donations from E Gower and A McKeegan. Well done to everyone.

**Play Area improvements - Froment Way and Sycamores Rec** - More play equipment has been ordered for Froment Way to replace equipment that had become unsafe. The two ride on springers in this area will be repainted. Again a grant has been applied for towards the cost of this work. Installation is planned to go ahead before the school summer holidays. The Clerk is also looking into grants for improving the Sycamores Recreation Ground play area with a new slide and some replacement equipment.

**Maintenance** - The main areas that this committee has been working on are: making sure our play areas are maintained, repaired and updated and supporting the work of the Play Working Party. The Maintenance Committee also planned improvements on the allotments including arranging for safety improvements to the entrance and roadway. The maintenance contract was updated this year and tenders were sought for grass cutting, tree and bush maintenance on land we own or maintain. The group also review the policies of the cemetery and are looking into improving the entrance and road-way.

**A10 trees responsibility next to the Parish Council Allotments** - When a tree on the A10 fell on

our boundary fence by the allotments we contacted the County Council to ask them to remove it and also to repair the fence. We were surprised when they claimed it was our tree. Cllr Anna Bradnam, Cllr Adam Horne and I have spent a considerable amount of time meeting with the County Council and arguing with them over the ownership and responsibility for the trees. Eventually we engaged a solicitor and arranged for a survey to be done. We now have evidence that the tree was the responsibility of the County and hope that this issue will soon be resolved and they will cover the costs we have incurred. It is important that we are not held responsible for this tree and all the other trees on the A10 by our boundary as this would cause us to incur considerable costs maintaining them.

**Fen Road development** - The development proposal for this site has not gone ahead due to the site being extremely important historically. Milton Parish Council were also successful in their application to Historic England to have the site registered.

**Development at Waterbeach and the Sewage works** - Although Milton is not directly affected by the proposed development of 11,000 new homes at Waterbeach and the huge similar sized proposed development on the sewage works site, we will be affected by any changes to the local roads as well as the impact of more people in the area. We are responding to consultations, unfortunately the A10 study is delayed.

**JEC also covered the following Committees and activities:** Community Care, Planning, Youth Club, Website, Milton Trolley Bus - minibus to Tesco for our elderly and infirm.

**Contractors** - We employ several contractors, some on a yearly contract and some for specific projects and advice. We have a grounds maintenance contract with Buchans who we are very pleased with. They maintain our open spaces, recreation grounds, allotments and verges. We also contract in some financial support from accountant, Griffith Kinsman who oversees pay and pensions for our staff and keeps us up to date on our spending trends and budgets. Our bus shelter windows are cleaned by another contracted service and we contract out our Youth Club service to Connection Bus Project. In addition we contract in legal advice including HR advice, cover for our Community Care Warden and a Surveyor when needed. Our councillors oversee and review the work of these contractors on a regular basis.

**Parish Staff and volunteers** - The Parish Council has four part time members of staff: our clerk Sarah Corder working 20 hours a week, Office Support, Elaine Taylor who has recently been appointed on an ad-hoc basis, Community Care Warden Tracey Ebbon who works 25 hours a week and Village Cleaner Philip Adams who works 9 hours a week as well as a small band of volunteer village Litter Pickers who regularly meet and litter pick specific problem areas. I am grateful to all our staff and volunteers who do a fantastic job.

**Thank you to all Parish Councillors** including Colin Duff who stood down recently. Thank you also to all our councillors who I am pleased to say have stood for re-election this year. Also thank you to those who manage Milton Community Centre and Recreation Grounds. We are also very grateful to our County Councillor and District Councillor Anna Bradnam and District Councillors Hazel Smith and Judith Rippeth for all the work they do.

**Future Challenges** - Updating more of our play equipment, sourcing additional recreation space, spending 46,000 of ring fenced arts funding, Waterbeach and the sewage works developments.

**Keeping Milton Special – JEC mentioned some of the benefits of living in Milton and close to the City:** bypassed village, the Park and Ride, the Guided Busway, the Cambridge North Railway Station and the Science Park, Milton Country Park, the river, local shops, fast food outlets, a doctors surgery, a post office, two churches and four pubs, Mobile Library, Milton Primary School, Impington Village College with free school bus for most Milton residents, local village magazine, village website and news system, Tomkins Mead Nature Reserve, the allotments, the cemetery and most of the open spaces and play areas, the Community Care Warden, minibus to Tesco for elderly and infirm. Also the Community Centre and 3 recreation grounds, tennis courts and a bowls green all managed for us by the Community Centre Charity. Many local groups and societies meet in the village.

**Could you be a Parish Councillor?** - If you would like to help keep Milton special why not consider applying to join us on the Parish Council. In particular we have a whole new challenge coming as the huge developments take shape at Waterbeach and on the sewage site, each with more homes than Ely.

**Future** - Being a Parish Councillor is a voluntary position. There was no election this year for Milton Parish Councillors as only 8 nominations were received by the District Council for the 12 positions (reduced this year from 15).

I am not seeking re-election as Chairman as I have now been Chairman for two periods of 5 years. During the past 5 years I have seen through many projects including the acquisition and development of the new pavilion and recreation ground at North Lodge Park as well as supporting and training a new clerk.

A full copy of this report will be printed in the Milton Village View.

JEC thanked the Parish Councillors, including those who stood down during the past year for all they had done over the last year and recent years as it had been a very busy time. JEC also thanked those who manage Milton Community Centre and Recreation Grounds. JEC also made a

plea for more people to join the Parish Council.

#### 5. **Charities' Report - Report for the Year to 31/12/2018**

A report was received from Andy Gray, Clerk, Milton Parochial Charities as follows:

A total of £2892 was received in rent from tenants who farm on land owned by the Charity.

Investment Income amounted to £508.

The Charity no longer provides any Lifeline Alarms for local residents

The Charity donated £2000 during the year to the Parish Council Community Care Scheme, £500 towards the cost of tree maintenance within the village and £257 for the Community Café room hire, which is run by Milton Surgery PPG.

#### 6. **Milton Community Centre Report**

Milton Community Centre report received from Andy Gray, Community Centre Manager as follows;

**Bookings:** These continue very much as in previous years, with the main building being used most of the time during the day and every week day evening. Weekends are also very busy, although Saturday night parties are not so popular.

The Annexe continues to be used by Kids-R-U's, before and after school or all day during school holidays. It is also used every evening Monday to Thursday + Saturday mornings by various different groups. Children's birthday parties are held on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, on average twice a month.

The Youth Building is home to Eddies Artworks (part of Edmund Trust) every week day from 9.00am to 4.00pm, the Youth Club is on a Tuesday evening during term time and Young Carers use the facilities every other Wednesday evening.

North Lodge Pavilion is used by Milton Colts and Milton Cricket Club at weekends. It is also used on Wednesday mornings by IVC for an adult French Class, Inland Waterways hire it every couple of months for evening meetings and occasionally it is used for birthday parties (adults and children) at weekends.

**Maintenance and Improvements:** The following work has been carried out during the last year:., The Annexe windows have all been replaced as they were showing signs of rot, All the lights in the Annexe have been replaced with LED's, which are safer, brighter and more efficient, Loft insulation has been installed in Community Centre rooms 1 & 2 with the aid of a grant from SCDC, The spotlights in the Community Centre have been upgraded to LED's

**Staff:** Besides myself, there are 3 staff members – Kevin, Ray and Philip, who share some of the cleaning duties and lock the buildings up in the evenings and at weekends.

RF reported that the facilities are very well used. North Lodge and The Youth Building room hire is available. JEC thanked the MCC for running the centre for the village.

#### 7. **Milton Action for Youth**

The Accounts for the period from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 were tabled with a report from The Connection Bus Project.

HMS reported that the Youth Club accounts at CBS has £73.93 balance left as of 1 April 2019.

Note: Youth Club expenses are now provided for by the Connection Bus Project who run our Youth Club. They bill the Parish Council termly.

**Reports:** Activities included playing chess, the cube, table tennis, pool, air hockey, making cookies, toast, burgers and pizzas.

Conversation topics included: school, music, relationships, drink & drugs, sleep, showering & personal hygiene, diets, staying safe and the police.

**Overview:** Attendance figures are disappointing this term, but the session has clashed with the Generation

Game course that has been running in Histon (week 2 to week 11) that some of the young people attended. We will be contacting the primary school at the beginning of the summer term to help promote to the year 6s and allow them to start attending as soon as possible. This should then give us a good cohort ready for the return after the summer holidays.

The lower numbers have meant that the young people have more opportunity to spend time in conversation with youth workers which is reflected in the personal nature some of these have taken.

#### 8. **County Councillor's Report from Anna Bradnam**

The County Councillor's report was tabled, the main topics being: **Structure of the County**

**Council: County Council responsibilities:** Social services to children and young people, older people, people with mental health problems, physical and learning disabilities, planning of school places, coordinated Early Years provision, nurseries etc; libraries, road maintenance, road safety measures, overall transport strategy, growth and wider development issues, trading standards, waster disposal and recycling centres. **Council Tax:** For the coming year 2019/20, the Council

agreed on 2% increase for adult social care plus 2.99% for other services. **Services for older people:** The Council aims to enable more people to live longer in their own homes and to be supported there, rather than going into sheltered accommodation or residential care.

**Communities:** The unpopular charge imposed for using computers in libraries has now been scrapped. The council has engaged a group called CIVIC to work on repositioning Cambridgeshire libraries at the centre of local communities. **Transport and Highways:** Road and footpath maintenance and repair are a source of concern and complaint from residents. Whilst really dangerous potholes are repaired quickly, those not meeting the criteria are put onto rotational review. **Planning:** Amey has recently submitted an appeal, which will be considered by the Planning Inspectorate and a recommendation made to the Secretary of State. The county council has also been moving forward with its consultation on the review of the Minerals and Waste Plan. **Education:** All secondary schools in Cambridgeshire are now academies which means that the Council has no jurisdiction over them. The funding which previously came to the County, now goes directly to the academy trusts but the County still has a responsibility to provide enough school places. School meals continue to be provided free for all infant school pupils.

**Combined Authority:** Since May 2017 there has been a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority with James Palmer (Con.) as Mayor. The CPCA comprises Peterborough City Council (a unitary authority), the District Councils of Huntingdonshire, Fenland, East Cambs and South Cambs as well as Cambridge City, and the County Council. **Greater Cambridge Partnership:** The GCP undertook its Choices for Better Journeys consultation in 2019. This seeks views on public transport, and on options to reduce traffic congestion in Cambridge, to improve public transport capacity and to reduce air pollution. **Local Government:** The structure and funding of local government is changing. We have recent evidence of this; Northamptonshire County Council collapsed financially and Cambridgeshire CC imposed a 1.2% salary cut on its employees last year by requiring unpaid leave over the Christmas holiday. There is clearly an expectation that services will be 'transformed' and local groups (parish councils and voluntary groups) will come to the rescue of those people in the greatest need.

**The Future?** The County Council has started work on assessing the risks of leaving the EU and is putting in place measures to minimise them. The County Council's Audit and Accounts Committee has considered a report on the potential local impact. It listed 16 potential risks, of which 10 have been scored as having potentially high or very high impact should they come into effect. The highest risk issues are: Workforce recruitment and retention, Ensuring EU citizens are fully informed, Community reactions, including increased community tensions, Impact on council finances should there be a negative national financial reaction, Interruption to supplies and services, including medicines and fuel, Impact on travel and road infrastructure caused by disruption to and from ports

**Q: What has the Mayor delivered in the last 2 years:**

**A: AB – Could not give a definitive answer**

**9. District Councillor's reports from Anna Bradnam, Hazel Smith and Judith Rippeth 2018/19**

The main headings: **District Council** – The political landscape changed in May 2018 when the Liberal Democrats won control of the Council. Milton & Waterbeach now have three district councillors, down from four. It is more work for us, but costs residents less. Hazel is the Lead Cabinet Member for Housing and Health, and Anna is Vice-Chairman of Council, and chairs the Licensing Committee. In the spirit of co-operation, we appointed an Independent Councillor as Council Chairman, and for good governance, appointed a Conservative as Chairman of the Scrutiny Group.

We have created a very ambitious 5-year **Business Plan** for 2019 to 2024. Handy versions are available online here <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/businessplan> and in hard copy. The four key priority areas for us are: **Growing local businesses and economies, Housing that is affordable for everyone to live in, Being green to our core, A modern and caring Council.** **"My South Cambs Portal:"** web-based customer portal has gone live. It will enable resident to access council services easily and quickly, enabling us to save money on printing papers and postage.

**The budget:** that we inherited for the 2018/19 year had a £450,000 hole in it. We have been able to restore that funding without reducing services. The council no longer receives any money from central government, so has to raise its own funding to provide services. In summary, the total service expenditure for 2019/20 is projected to be £20.2 million, of which £9.1 million will be raised from council tax. Housing and the cost of it continues to be a challenge. We are aiming to meet this by building 70 **new council houses** a year, and more where possible. We have drafted a new Housing Strategy, looking at provision of variety of types of housing including for downsizing, single people etc. We're also supporting self-builders and making plots available: the first was at Benet Close, Milton.

**Local action**

JR and AB worked tirelessly in combination with the Waterbeach Cycling Campaign to press County Highways to carry out essential improvements to the **A10 cycle path** between Milton and Waterbeach. The path was 'sided-back' in October which has in places doubled its width.

**Waterbeach Greenway project:** which completed its consultation last year and received much public support will provide far more pleasant routes into Cambridge.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** to make it more pedestrian and cyclist focused, supported by far improved public transport connections. It is essential that we make these truly viable alternatives to using private cars, especially for short journeys.

**South Cambs Local Plan:** since this was adopted in September, we have been able to demonstrate a Five Year Land Supply which helps to ensure that developments happen in the right places, reducing the threat of speculative and inappropriate development, although sadly this has come too late for Waterbeach. Residents from surrounding villages have been invited to attend and contribute to the regular **Waterbeach New Town Community Liaison Forum** meetings, which AB chairs.

**The Waterbeach SPD** was adopted by Cabinet in February 2019 which provides another level of guidance and holds legal weight but sits underneath the Local Plan. Urban and Civic's Outline Application for the western half of the new town is due to be heard at Planning Committee in May.

**Landbeach Tithe Barn Trust** has recently signed a lease with SCDC and has been granted listed building consent for essential repairs. The Trust now has legal status and is able to apply to larger grant funds.

**Reducing our use of plastics:** JR recently visited Milton CE Primary School to teach Years 4-6 pupils about the importance of reducing our use of plastics and also to pass on the message about more effective recycling.

**Cambridge North railway station** is now well-used, and the area between the railway and Milton Road is to become a new high-density quarter of Cambridge. Cycling routes will be improved when the **new bridge over the River Cam** is built later this year, linking the new station to Newmarket Road. The Cambridge Science Park is also being redeveloped at a higher density, and a new way of living, with less reliance on the motor car is going to be important here. Government funding has been secured to move the sewage works and we expect a public consultation this year to decide on a new site.

**Liaison meetings with FCC** who run the Milton landfill. The site has been in the spotlight in 2018, with the sad and ultimately fruitless search for the body of Corrie McKeague, and then the landfill fire in October. Close liaison with the Environment Agency has ensured that odour control had been a lot better this year. The operator has planning permission until 2020 but as recycling rates increase and less waste goes to landfill, they are asking to extend this to 2026, in order to complete filling the void to restore it to a smooth shape.

**Amey Liaison Forum** AB, HMS and JR attend regular meetings as do representatives of your parish councils.

**Farmland Museum:** South Cambs awarded the farmland Museum £8,500 to support its upkeep and maintenance.

We'd like to acknowledge the **hard work of parish council clerks and councillors** during a year of turbulence and intense pressure to develop. We appreciate how much you care and we thank you for your vital local input. In turn we would like to reassure you that we too mind enormously about the life and health of all our villages and continue to represent your interests at every opportunity.

## 10. Question and Answer Session

Questions from the public included:

Q: The NE fringe of the sewage works development will part of that fall into the Milton Parish boundary and how does that affect the Fen Road site?

A: HMS – yes part of the development will fall within the Milton boundary. The reason why part of Fen Road is the Milton boundary is due to the land being cut off from the railway line. There is green belt land by the site and this will not be included in any future planning.

JEC thanked those who attended and the Parish Councillors, District and County Councillors for all their hard work over the last year.

DO and AB thanked JEC for all her hard work carried out over the year as Chairman.

The meeting closed at 8.25p.m.

Signed.....Date.....

## **Appendix 2**

### **Milton Parish Council Chairman's Annual Parish Report 2020/2021 [Includes information from 2019/2020]**

This is my first Chairman's Annual report in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Reports from my earlier time on the Parish Council were in the 1990s. The report is unusual in that it is two years since we were last able to hold an Annual Parish Meeting. Although legislation was introduced that allowed online Council meetings, legal guidance in 2020 was that it was not permitted to hold Annual Parish Meetings other than face-face which was not possible because of COVID-19 restrictions. Parish Council and Committee meetings have been held online for the past 12 months. This year the guidance has changed allowing us to meet online for a Parish Meeting.

The past year has been difficult for us all in many ways but has also shown the strengths in our community. Many thanks are due to the volunteers who quickly came together to help people required to isolate in their homes. Recently the Doctors and surgery staff, more volunteers, the Community Centre Manager and Committee members ensured the smooth running of the Vaccination Centre in Coles Road opening often at short notice whenever vaccine is delivered.

At the Council Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> April, we expressed our sadness at the death of HRH Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh, and our condolences to HM The Queen and to the Royal Family. A minute silence was held in remembrance of HRH Prince Philip.

A review of the Remembrance activities in the Village gives a clear illustration of the differences between the two years. It is about 25 years since the Parish restarted the short Annual Remembrance gathering that takes place on Remembrance Day itself. In 2019 as in previous years Remembrance commemorations were well attended including the Scout and Guide Groups parade on Sunday, and Year 6 children from the Primary School on the 11<sup>th</sup>. Those gatherings could not take place in 2020 because of COVID-19 restrictions. A small group attended quietly and carefully distanced on both days. A Wreath was laid on behalf of the Village on Remembrance Sunday, followed by a one from Parish Council on Remembrance Day. Other groups also arranged for their wreaths to be added to the Memorial. In both years, the crotchet poppies put in a welcome re-appearance.

#### **Parish Councillors and Staff**

Parish Councillors are all volunteers, and I would like to thank them for their efforts for the Village, and especially their patience and persistence in dealing with the challenges of online meetings.

We welcomed Paul Ellwood, Andrew Latchem, and Alex Markham as Councillors, joining Anna Bradnam, Jane Coston, Rob Farrington, Adam Horne, David Owen, Hazel Smith, and myself Don Wildman forming the full Council today. We would welcome applications for the remaining vacancy. More information is on the website <https://www.miltonvillage.org.uk/how-to-become-a-parish-councillor>.

Our staff have also had to cope with vastly different working conditions for over a year and have ensured that the administration and services have worked smoothly throughout. Our Clerk, Sarah Corder recently achieved the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) qualification and continues to keep us up to date with the required policies and procedures. Our previous Assistant Clerk resigned as she moved away from the Village. John Barrett has stepped ably into the position despite distancing requirements making use of the office more restrictive. Philip Adams continues his tours of the Village including additional regular inspection and cleaning of play equipment as part of COVID-19 precautions.

#### **Community Care**

Our Community Care Warden Tracey Ebbon had to make significant changes to working practices to cope with social distancing and other precautions yet still provides the same valuable support to our elderly and vulnerable residents who wish to remain in the own home. Sarah and Hazel have also provided additional support as backup to Tracey. The scheme continues to receive high praise for the care and support provided.

#### **Milton Trolley Bus**

The regular minibus service to Tesco for our elderly and infirm was not much used in recent months but should pick up again as distancing restrictions are eased. Milton Charities have continued to support the service at the reduced level.

## **Youth**

Council continues to provide funding in support the Youth Activities run by the Connections Bus Project although unfortunately the service has had to work in different ways because of the need for social distancing. A recent online session providing Babysitting training was well received.

## **Recreation facilities**

The larger recreation areas and facilities at Coles Road, The Sycamores, and North Lodge Park are managed and operated by the Milton Community Centre and Recreations Grounds Management Committee (MCC). The MCC is a Charity created over 30 years ago specifically for that purpose. Parish Council make an annual contribution to the running costs. The smaller open spaces at Humphries Way, The Rowans, Froment Way, and Hawthorn Hedge are overseen by Parish Council. The Play Area at North Lodge Park is the responsibility of the residents and the Management Company.

Both MCC and Parish Council were eligible for Government COVID-19 grants paid via South Cambs District Council to support additional costs and income loss during the pandemic. This was particularly important to MCC as the bulk of their income stopped during the closures.

The MCC Committee is made up of volunteers including representatives of the main village clubs and associations who are regular affiliated. I know that the Committee would welcome more support so please look out for their AGM later in the year to find out more.

Thanks to the Management Committee and particularly the Centre Manager for the intense work over the year in understanding and implementing COVID-19 guidance which has meant closing and reopening multiple times over the year. Use of the Community Centre and some other facilities continues to be restricted. The outdoor play areas are open but please continue to follow the safety guidance. Additional information is available on the website at <https://www.miltonvillage.org.uk/milton-community-centre>.

## **Play equipment maintenance.**

New equipment has been installed on Froment Way including a wheelchair accessible roundabout.

Other play equipment has been repaired or repainted and new bark added. Protruding roots were removed from The Rowans area.

New equipment and some repairs and renovations have been ordered for The Sycamores play-area. Installation is due to begin in mid-May.

The play areas are frequently inspected by Parish or MCC staff. We also arrange for bi-annual ROSPA safety inspections. Following inspection reports the Motorbike Springer on Froment Way has been replaced as although it was safe to use, the mountings were beginning to wear, and we were not able to source replacements. One swing at Coles Road had already been taken out of use and has now been repaired.

If you see issues needing attention, please notify the Parish Clerk except for Coles Road, Sycamores, and North Lodge Park Pavilion and adjacent pitch area which should be reported to the MCC Manager.

## **Defibrillators**

Two new AED units have been acquired, one funded by a grant and the other by Parish Council. Thanks to Pro-Serv for contributing the installation work.

The AEDs at The Sycamores and North Lodge Pavilions are regularly monitored by the Clubs and MCC. The unit located at the Parish Office in Coles Road is checked by the Clerk.

## **Other Village Maintenance**

There is always work to be done around the Village which is organised and overseen by the Maintenance Committee and the Clerk.

### **- General grounds maintenance**

We employ contractors for general grounds maintenance including grass cutting and tree/shrub management of the open spaces owned by the Parish including the Cemetery on Landbeach Road and cut grass areas within the Village that are owned by the District and County Councils who make an annual contribution to the costs. Some larger tasks that require two or more operators working together have been delayed and it may take some time to catch up the resulting backlog.

Tree and shrub work can take time to organise. Advice from the Tree Warden and Tree Surgeons maybe needed. The work needs to be done at the right time of year. Quotations must be arranged for larger unplanned works. However, first we must check that the land is Council owned. Some strips of land between footpaths and garden fences are the responsibility of the house owners.

Just before Christmas we had a report of a fallen tree blocking the footpath running along the Bund. Several of us spent an interesting hour untangling and moving the branches to the side to maintain access for walkers. Our Contractors handled additional work on the larger trunks to complete the job. Note that the bushes and trees are for screening and are maintained by the Parish. Please do not carry out any maintenance work along the Bund and pathways instead report any issues to the Clerk for attention. No waste materials are to be left along the pathways and bunds.

The fallen and overgrown bushes around the Village Pump have been cleared but the area will take time to fully recover.

Fortunately, the Village was not severely affected by wind during the unusually heavy storms. A large tree fell from private land blocking Church Lane. Volunteers quickly had the lane open again to the relief of the congregation who were in the Church. A tree that came down along Fen Road was on land managed by County and dealt with by them.

Other tree work was carried out by our contractors around Coles Road car park, Tomkins Mead, Allotments and The Sycamores recreation ground.

However the unusually heavy rain accompanying the storms created a significant problem with surface water on the fields, opens spaces and Cemetery as the rain was falling onto already saturated ground. The ditches and drains did not cope with the volume partly because of restricted flow further along the system towards the Cam. South Cambs and County support improved the flow in the public drains (ditches), but some are under riparian ownership and so the responsibility of the landowner on either side. Councillors will continue to press for regular maintenance of these essential services.

- **Tomkins Mead**

Minor repairs were carried out to the boardwalk and boot scrapers were installed at both ends to help visitors keep mud clear of the walkway.

- **War Memorial area**

Roots were removed from around the two memorial benches and the area seeded. The Golden Jubilee tree is showing good growth where the intruding bushes and ivy were removed.

- **The Rowans**

Bluebells and snowdrops have been planted between the trees in the area at corner of The Rowans and Cambridge Road near to Edmund House although the other growth has overtaken that area early this year and will need some attention.

- **The Cemetery**

The front section of the Landbeach Road Cemetery remains the responsibility of the Church, but the Parish Council support the general maintenance. In addition to grass cutting, repairs are being made to the Cemetery gate. Regular topple testing is organised to check for stability of the older headstones and some remedial work is being organised in conjunction with the relevant families where possible.

- **New Trees**

Council took advantage of an offer from SCDC for a voucher valued at £60 covering the purchase of up to 3 mature trees for planting on Parish land. Planting the trees social distancing challenge. A Mountain Ash was planted on the Hawthorn Hedge area, and two Flowering Cherry trees at The Rowans play area.

Several packs of trees were provided by the Woodland Trust. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped plant the trees, and especial thanks to Adam Horne who spent several days organising and supporting the planting over a damp weekend. The Orchard with the mixture of wildlife friendly and fruit trees will be a significant asset once established.

Additional tree planting is planned for late autumn when more tree packs are expected. Hopefully by then we will then be able to involve more people in the planting process.

- **The Bund**

A survey of the Bund is planned to identify areas needing attention and possibly replanting as some grants may be available to support this work.

### **A10 Trees responsibility next to the Parish Council Allotments**

The ownership of the trees along the A10 next to the Allotments has been in dispute for over two years since a falling tree damaged the boundary fence resulting in significant cost to the Parish in repairs and legal fees. I am pleased to report that the matter has been resolved with County Council confirming their ownership and responsibility. All Parish costs have been recovered and remedial work is being planned and organised by the County Council.

### **The Little Library**

Following on from the success of the Little Library project on Coles Road organised by volunteers and provided by The Phoenix Trust Council agreed to support the project by funding the purchase of a second unit from The Phoenix Trust. Thanks to the volunteers for organising the scheme and to those providing the space for the units.

### **Milton Country Park**

Parish Council agreed to provide one-off grant of £10,000 from reserves to Cambridge Sports Lake Trust as an emergency payment during the Covid-19 pandemic to help keep the park open as it is a well-used by residents and the Trust was not eligible for the Government emergency grants available to other similar organisations. South Cambridgeshire District Council also made a grant available.

### **Public Phone**

Council received a proposal that the payphone on Coles Road be decommissioned and adopted by the Council. Council objected as it is the only public phone in the Village and as such BT has a responsibility to maintain it. It was agreed that the service will continue and the kiosk has been cleaned by BT/Openreach.

### **Highways**

Several issues with road and path surfaces have been reported to Highways maintenance including broken manholes and the road surface around Willow Crescent. Some of the remedial work has been completed. You can help by reporting new Highways issues online at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults>

Council has successfully applied for a grant from the A14 Parish Legacy fund to improve the road surface and markings on the High Street crossing by Pond Green. The work will be delivered by CCC and their contractors, but final design and implementation has been delayed because of distancing requirements. We await a timescale for the work to be completed.

### **Traffic Calming and Parking**

We met with Highways in response to a request for a pedestrian crossing on Cambridge Road near to Barnabas Court. The number of access points and laybys in the area meant that the request cannot be taken further.

Parking is an ongoing challenge around the Village. Many people have raised concerns about the junctions of The Rowans with Cambridge Road, and Fen Road directly opposite the junction with Coles Road. Double yellow lines were suggested to visually reinforce the existing Highway Code restrictions. A questionnaire published on the Parish Council website and in the Village View showed a significant majority of respondents in favour of the proposed schemes, so the project was passed to the CCC Highway Services Team for costing for TRO proposal. The costs have now been confirmed and accepted at the April meeting of the Parish Council. We await confirmation of implementation.

### **Illegal encampment**

Travellers set-up camp with caravans and other vehicles on the Coles Road Recreation Ground. Arrangements were made for them to be moved on.

### **Planning and Consultations**

Alongside the activities that have immediate visible effect in the Village, we also receive copies of all planning applications for properties within Milton and those in the neighbourhood that may affect the Village. These can vary from a few small supporting documents to ones with over 100 documents some of significant size. These are reviewed and commented usually by the Planning Committee, or at a full Council meeting if the deadline for comment is short, or the project is a major infrastructure item. Whilst the Planning Officers and South Cambs Councillors consider our comments we have no direct involvement in the final decision making,

Councillors also review and comment on a range of consultations on surrounding development proposals and topics like the draft Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan covering the next 5 years, North East Cambridge Area Action Plan, and the

Greater Cambridge Local Plan. We also commented on the nearby rail crossings affected by the Network Rail Cambridge Re-signalling project particularly Fen Road.

Council submitted a detailed response to the Cambridge Shared Planning Service on the draft North East Cambridge Area Action Plan. A joint letter of common objections was also agreed with neighbouring Parish Councils. Comments were also made on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

A significant amount of Council time was spent on responding to several consultations for the new Police Operations Centre, development of the A10, and the Anglian Water scheme to relocate the Wastewater Treatment plant. Proposals for trialling new Cycling and Walking measures also led to lively discussions.

Council agreed to support a joint letter with other affected Parishes objecting to the proposed use of green-belt sites for the Wastewater Treatment Plant relocation and responded with broader comments more specific to the sites off Butt Lane/Mere Way. Following on from the AWA choice of preferred site for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Council representatives are included in ongoing design consultations.

Council raised several issues on the planning application for the Police hub including concerns about use of greenbelt, drainage, traffic, and safety of cycle and pedestrian access. We received support from our District Councillors and others on the South Cambs Planning Committee. The plans were approved with conditions including improvements to drainage design, and provision for monitored CCTV on the A10 footbridge. Planning Officers also recorded that this use of greenbelt was an exceptional case and should not be seen as a precedent for future development in that area.

Residents' concerns over the introduction of a moto-cross course on agricultural land on Fen Road were investigated and Council sought advice to clarify the planning situation for such usage. It was found to be outside permitted development and so is being progressed by SCDC Planning Officers.

## Finance

After a detailed review of the income and expenditure Council set a precept of £133,000 for the financial year 2021/2022 unchanged from the current year.

### Draft Accounts for Year from 01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021

These figures have been prepared on an INCOME and EXPENDITURE basis following information in "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: a Practitioner's Guide".

Description	2019/20	2020/2021
<b>Balances brought fwd</b>	£407,248.24	£473,808.59
<b>Annual precept</b>	£132,000.00	£133,000.00
<b>Total other receipts</b>	£76,105.08	£35,275.41
<b>Staff Costs</b>	£39,370.72	£42,875.90
<b>Loan interest/capital repayments</b>	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Total other payments</b>	£105,962.55	£111,240.58
<b>Balances carried forward</b>	£473,808.59	£487,967.52
<b>Total Cash and Short Term Investments</b>	£462,250.77	£496,591.38
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	£190,693.00	£190,694.00
<b>Total Borrowings</b>	£0.00	£0.00

**Note: Accounts for 2019/20 have been adjusted to meet revised reporting requirements for staff costs so differ from draft values reported in the previous report.**

Reserves:	Balance
General Reserve	£215,389.69
Capital Reserve	£220,000.00
Earmarked Reserve	£52,577.83

## Parish Office and contact

The Office remains closed to the public except for the most urgent appointments that cannot be handled by phone or mail/email. If you have an urgent issue that requires direct contact, then please first telephone the Clerk on 01223 861447 or 07853 170646 so that we can arrange a way to help you

whilst minimising direct contact. Further information is on the website - <https://www.miltonvillage.org.uk/>

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Community Centre Report – March 2021**

COVID vaccinations are still taking place in the Community Centre and Over Community Centre both servicing the villages to the North of Cambridge. We have had sessions on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of March. We have been informed that there will vaccination clinics for second doses on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of April.

All of our regular groups have been cancelled for the majority of the month due to Lockdown. Kids-R-Us have been running After School Club sessions each day in the Annex and North Lodge Park following the return to school for all children on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March.

From the 29<sup>th</sup> of March we have seen a return of children's tennis and football clubs and adult outdoor 5 aside and walking netball returning to the tennis courts and 5 aside pitch in line with the easing of lockdown and the government's roadmap. We have also seen the return of Eddies Art Works to the Youth Building at the Sycamores.

Andy West has been appointed as Community Center Manager following the recruitment process and started on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March with Andy Gray taking retirement from the 31<sup>st</sup> of March. Andy Gray will still be supporting the Community Center and Andy West when needs arise.

Andy Gray and Andy West  
Community Centre Managers  
30/3/2021

## Appendix 4

### **Milton Action for Youth report to Annual Parish Meeting in May 2021**

#### **ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2019 TO 31st MARCH 2021**

INCOME	£
1 <sup>st</sup> April 2019 balance	73.93
Interest Dec 2019	0.18
Interest Dec 2020	0.10
EXPENDITURE	
... none ...	
BALANCE (Cambridge Building Society) at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021	74.21

Note: Youth Club expenses are now provided for by the Connections Bus Project who run our youth club. They bill the Parish Council termly. This account remains available for Youth Club expenses when required. The signatories are Hazel Smith and Linda Henderson.

Clubs ran on Tuesday evenings as usual during 2019, and shut down in March 2020 due to Coronavirus restrictions. The Connections Bus Project had its AGM on October 26<sup>th</sup> 2020, and there Anna Bradnam and I learnt that they were running some successful online courses, supported by parish councils, and a couple of Milton's club members had already attended. The Parish Council agreed to support a babysitting course in early 2021, which we were billed for (bill shared with other parish councils). Connections will be restarting face to face youth work outside or in the Milton Youth Centre when this is possible.

Hazel Smith (Treasurer)

## Appendix 5

### **Annual Report to Parishes April 2021**

#### **A report on Cambridgeshire County Council from Cllr Anna Bradnam**

The last twelve months has been so very strange. Our lives have been dominated by the Covid-19 virus but, at the same time, every effort has been made to 'keep things going'. The County Council has continued to function and most of its scheduled meetings have taken place but by Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

An additional complication was the severe flooding which occurred as a result of the heaviest rainfall for many years over Oct/Nov and the Christmas 2020 period. This affected some villages more severely than others but reminded us that this area is not called Fen Edge for nothing, with very flat land making natural drainage slow at the best of times. The excess water exposed inadequacies in the maintenance of road gullies and land drains. The problems arising from that are being addressed by councils at all levels.

At the time of writing, we begin to see signs of a return to 'normal' and we hope that the vaccination programme will be sufficient to control any increase in infection rates when restrictions are released.

I would like to thank the Clerks, Parish Councillors for their hard work supporting our communities. Thank you too to District Councillor Judith Rippeth for her involvement in the meal delivery scheme and to Hazel Smith as part of the Covid Support Team. My special thanks go to Hazel for 17 years' service in this ward and for her practicality, for having an eagle eye on the numbers and the words and for her wisdom.

#### **My report covers:**

**Paragraphs 1 – 3** provide the factual details about the County Council

**Paragraphs 4 – 5** summarise the Council's financial position and policy

**Paragraphs 6 – 9** report on the main areas of County Council activity which affect the lives of residents

**Paragraph 10** reports on the Combined Authority of which Cambridgeshire is a part.

**Paragraph 11** reports on village matters

**Paragraph 12** comments on the national scene, as it affects local government.

**Paragraph 13** summarises the national pressures and uncertainties we face.

#### **Keeping you informed**

Whilst a lot of work goes on within committees, I've kept in touch with the people I represent by meeting people on the ground and by attending regular Parish Council meetings. My DC colleagues and I have kept residents up to date through regular leaflets. I recognise that not everyone shares my political view but I engage with all residents who raise issues with me and I represent their concerns to the County Council.

#### **1. The political balance of the Council**

The political composition of the 61-member Council now stands as:

35 Conservatives, 16 Liberal Democrats, 7 Labour, 2 'St. Neots Independents', 1 Independent.

The Council has seven decision-making committees, with every Committee chaired and vice-chaired by a Conservative and a majority of Conservatives on each committee. The committees are:

Adults	Children and Young People
Commercial and Investment	Economy and Environment
Health	Communities and Partnerships
Highways and Community Infrastructure	

The overall political and financial direction of the Council lies with the General Purposes Committee comprising 15 members. This is chaired by the Leader of the Council who is also the Leader of the Conservative Group.

In addition there are several more smaller committees covering, for example, Planning, Audit and Accounts, Constitution and Ethics, Pensions, Staffing Appeals. All the committees are chaired by Conservatives except Audit and Accounts which was chaired until recently by a Lib Dem Councillor.

Full details of the County Council structure, committees and meetings with reports can be seen on-line at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk). Full Council meetings are web-cast.

## **2. Council officers and Council offices**

The Chief Executive, Gillian Beasley, is shared with Peterborough City Council as part of the policy of reducing back-office costs and several other senior posts are also shared with Peterborough.

The CCC HQ building, Shire Hall, has been closed since March 2020 and has been emptied prior to being re-developed for other purposes. The County Council will move to a new building in Alconbury Weald, probably from September 2021. The new building will be more economical to run but, being on the western edge of the Council area, will incur increased travel costs and time for the many Cambridge-based staff. There is no direct public transport link either by rail or bus, so staff are being offered a shuttle bus.

## **3. What the Council provides**

- Social services to children and young people, older people, people with mental health problems, physical and learning disabilities;
- Planning of school places and some support for schools (although the funding for day-to-day running comes from central government);
- Coordinated Early Years provision, nurseries etc.;
- Libraries;
- Road maintenance and road safety measures;
- Growth and wider development issues;
- Trading standards; waste disposal and recycling centres.
- The former responsibility for overall transport strategy is gradually being taken over by the Combined Authority.

## **4. The key issues faced by Cambridgeshire County Council: reduced funding, increasing costs, increasing demand and Covid**

Central government continues to reduce general grant funding except that some extra money has been made available for Covid measures. The Local Government Association, a cross-party organisation, has been raising concerns recently about the greater financial burden being placed on local councils; several have become insolvent, e.g. Northamptonshire. County Councils have the flexibility to increase tax levels up to a cap, above which they would have to call a referendum. The demand for services is increasing as the proportion of the population needing adult social care support increases. Although the total number of children under five is not increasing at the moment, the proportion with more complex needs is increasing and placing greater demands on a hard-pressed service. The general pattern is for the cost of providing services to rise above general levels of inflation. The longer a council fails to raise council tax, the more difficult it becomes to pay for the necessary services it must provide.

## **5. Council Tax**

The government has again capped the levels by which local councils can increase tax for 2021-22. The maximum increase allowed is 3% over two years towards Adult Social Care and 1.99% towards other services. Cambridgeshire CC has decided to limit the social care increase to 1% in 2021/22 (followed by 2% next year) and 1.99% for other services.

So, for the coming year 2021-22, the total 2.99% increase will cost a Band D household an extra £54.22 per year. Over 60% of households in Cambridgeshire are in the lower bands A-C. In round figures, every 1% increase brings in about £3 million to the Council.

Since the government introduced capping in 2014, the Council has not made use of the full flexibility to increase council tax. The compounding effect of those yearly decisions, means that the Council's income is much less than it could have been if it had increased by the full amount each year.

## **6. Services for older people**

More and more people are living longer and, mainly healthier lives. When people do become dependent, the cost to the Council is considerable. The Council's aim is to enable more people to live longer at home and be supported there, rather than going into sheltered accommodation. The Council policy of 'Transformation' is based on reducing the number of staff, delegating more responsibilities for care to volunteers and making an assumption that those needing that care are happy with that.

While it is important to seek cost savings, it seems obvious that provision will get worse for some and this is a worry both locally and nationally.

## **7. Transport and Highways**

- a. Road maintenance and footpath repair are the most frequent concerns raised by residents along with the length of delay and the quality of work done.
- b. The decision by the County Council ruling group two years ago to reduce the twice-yearly drain clearance to a reactive response has unfortunately contributed to local incidents of flooding.
- c. In Milton, Landbeach and Waterbeach I've worked with Highways officers to get gullies and drains cleared, road markings refreshed and speed reduced.
- d. Highways England is responsible for the maintenance of motorways and trunk roads but most A and B roads are maintained at the expense of the local authority which is designated as the 'Highways Authority'. The Highways Authority receives a grant from central government towards those costs.

## **8. Education**

All Cambridgeshire secondary schools are now 'academies' which means that the Council has no jurisdiction over them. The disruption of Covid has caused the suspension of Ofsted inspections and of conventional examinations so it is not possible to make a comment on the success of Cambridgeshire schools against national benchmarks. Only a small minority of primaries have become academies.

The County Council retains responsibility for the 'well-being' of children in academies though it has no formal role in intervening if things go wrong.

The Central government grant to Cambridgeshire improved in 2015-16, and has been maintained. A 'National Funding Formula' published in September 2017 was a small move in the right direction but costs in schools have increased at a higher rate. Independent researchers confirm that, **in real terms**, funds available to schools have been cut by 9% since 2010.

The major topic this year, as last, is that funding for children with special needs has not kept up with the demand. The 'High Needs Block' in Cambridgeshire now has a deficit of £28 million, and a similar pattern is seen in other counties so this is a national problem.

## **9. Climate Change**

The County Council, along with the Districts, is beginning to take this seriously and is beginning to develop a strategy to reduce energy consumption. The particular problem for Cambridgeshire is the massive expansion of housing and population. Cambridgeshire is an attractive place to live and though house prices are rising, they are good value compared with the London area. A rapidly increasing population puts pressures on many services which use energy. The Council is taking steps to strengthen the local electricity grid, as the network will face increasing demands as more services decarbonise.

## **10. Combined Authority**

Since May 2017 there has been a 'Combined Authority' for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with James Palmer (Con.) as Mayor. The combined authority comprises: Peterborough City Council (a unitary authority), the District Councils of Huntingdonshire, Fenland, East Cambs, South Cambs along with Cambridge City, and Cambridgeshire County Council.

The Mayor has a Cabinet comprising the Council Leaders from all the constituent councils, i.e. five Conservatives, one Labour and one Lib Dem, and there is also a scrutiny panel.

Some people claim that the introduction of a Combined Authority makes it unnecessary to have County and District Councils as well as parish councils and perhaps one of the layers of local government could be removed to save costs. The Mayor was charged with reviewing this but he has not progressed this.

The Mayor has recently overruled the Greater Cambridge Partnership in connection with road development proposals. He has decided not to have his HQ at Alconbury as originally planned but to have it in Ely. The Mayor has also been offered greater scope by central government in order to 'level him up' to the Metro Mayors in the North of England. This means that he will take on adult education and the development of a university in Peterborough. He also has oversight of housing development.

## **11. Villages – Milton, Landbeach and Waterbeach**

- a. I attend monthly Parish Council meetings where I report on current issues and answer questions from parish councillors. I liaise with the Parish Clerk and/or Chairman between meetings if and when required.

b. Some pot-hole and pavement repairs have been done but many more are needed. I have asked for gullies to be cleaned out and drainage pipes (e.g. Landbeach crossroad) to be cleared out and repaired.

c. Flooding or the risk of it, has been a major concern. I have engaged with County and District Councils, Anglian Water and the Internal Drainage Board to attempt minimise harm to properties in future.

d. I have asked the council to maintain and cut back vegetation on the cycle paths on Butt Lane, Landbeach Road and the A10.

d. Our area is subject to proposals for numerous strategic projects: the A10, Cambridge Autonomous Metro, emergency active transport measures, public transport proposals, relocation of the Anglian Water Wastewater Treatment Plant and East West Rail. I have responded to consultations and supported parish councils.

## **12. The future for local government services and the implication for communities**

It is becoming increasingly clear that the structure and funding of local government as we have known it for many years has changed and will continue to change. Central government has been decreasing its grants to local councils with the expectation that services will be 'transformed' and local groups (parish councils and voluntary groups) are expected to take on more responsibility for supporting people early on.

The County Council has continued to make savings in its procedures and in increasing income. For example, it has set itself up as a property company and is trying to sell off some of its land holdings for housing.

## **13. National uncertainty**

We, as a county and a country face greater uncertainty than most of us can remember in our lifetime.

It is becoming apparent that the process of Brexit will be more complicated than previously claimed.

We do not know what the implications will be and problems are emerging for fishermen and farmers, with exporters and importers requiring more complicated and onerous paperwork.

If we want to address climate change seriously, we will all probably need to make quite dramatic changes to our daily patterns of behaviour.

We hope the government's roadmap to recovery from Covid works as planned. If the vaccination programme continues to go well, we may be safer but it seems unclear if we'll ever get back to the old 'normal'.

## **Appendix 6**

### **District Councillor annual report to parishes – April 2021**

We would first like to thank Hazel Smith for her excellent and unstinting service for her constituents over the past seventeen years, and for her dedication to her role as Cabinet lead for Housing since 2018, and on a personal note, for her friendship and inspirational guidance.

These last twelve months have of course been dominated by the Coronavirus pandemic and this report covers the activities of the District Council and your local councillors. SCDC has been highly active in the local government response to the pandemic and has responded quickly and flexibly to the changing circumstances. Significant numbers of Council officers have been redeployed from their usual duties to those dealing directly and urgently with the Covid response, such as the Business Recovery team. Although this has meant some disruption to normal council services, most have been delivered in a timely way and hopefully local residents have not been too severely affected.

#### **Community Volunteers:**

One of the most heartening things that has come out of the pandemic has been the terrific volunteer community response. It was estimated that, at the height of the Covid emergency, over 4,500 people were engaged across South Cambridgeshire in helping their fellow citizens get through the worst of the crisis. Milton, Landbeach, Waterbeach and Chittering were blessed with excellent groups, which were well organised and highly effective. We would like to record our thanks to all of those who stepped up and made such a difference.

As we emerge out of the most recent (and hopefully) the last lockdown, the Communities team will continue to work with the local groups to liaise on how to move forward and harness the energy and creativity which has come out of this crisis. As a member of the Scrutiny and Overview Task and Finish group on the Covid-19 response, I was struck by the breadth and ingenuity of ideas and how each local community group has supported their villages; something which we plan to build on as hopefully soon virtual coffee mornings and the like, can move to actual face to face meetings as we cautiously return to some sort of normality.

#### **Caution urged as lockdown rules eased – briefing from the County Council:**

Residents of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are being urged to show restraint and continue to follow the rules as lockdown restrictions are eased this week – remembering that a gradual return to a more normal life ‘depends on us’:

Outdoor gatherings - including in private gardens - of either six people (the Rule of 6) or two households are now allowed. Indoor gatherings are not permitted.

Outdoor sports – Activities that take place outdoors, such as tennis and basketball courts and open-air swimming pools are allowed to reopen, and people can take part in formally organised outdoor sports. This does not permit spectators.

Work from home - People should continue to work from home where they can.

Stay local – Residents are advised to stay local and minimise the number of journeys they make where possible, avoiding travel at the busiest times and on the busiest routes. People should also remember to take face coverings and sanitiser with them.

Travel abroad - Travel abroad is prohibited, other than for a small number of permitted reasons. Holidays abroad are not allowed, in order to manage the risk of imported variants and protect the vaccination programme.

Remain cautious, even if you’ve had the vaccine - This is because the vaccine takes two to three weeks to work and for a full course, two doses are required. It is still possible to catch COVID after having had the vaccine, so it’s important to continue with social distancing, handwashing and other safety measures.

#### **Pre-cooked meal delivery scheme:**

SCDC continues to work in partnership with C3 churches with delivering a weekly meal to local residents who are isolated or facing financial difficulty. Locally we currently support 25 households and I would personally like to thank Revd Paul Butler for helping me with the bulk of the delivery of these meals and also other volunteers who have stepped in on occasion.

#### **Covid Recovery Grants for Villages:**

SCDC has just launched an additional Community Chest grant programme specifically for Covid Recovery and has put £30,000 in the pot. The aim is to help local community groups and parish councils resume activities that might have been stopped due to Covid or which have tailed off in recent months.

The Council's Grants Advisory Committee temporarily amended the rules around the eligibility criteria for its Community Chest Grant scheme for the next two months to allow applications for these grants of up to £2,000.

Previously, few parish councils could apply to the scheme as the criteria stipulated they had to have fewer than 160 registered electors. But for the next eight weeks, it will be open to all parish councils and community groups – including new ones that are now setting up. Applications are being accepted until 10th May 2021, with submissions being reviewed at the May 28th Grants Advisory Committee meeting.

Meanwhile, the normal Community Chest Grant scheme continues to run for community groups for a maximum grant of £1,000.

Applying for a Covid Recovery Community Chest Grant is the same as applying for a standard Community Chest Grant. The applicant simply selects which type of grant they are applying for at the start of the process with all other criteria being the same. See <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-development/grants/community-chest-grants/>

### **Mobile/Community Wardens:**

In the last 12 months SCDC has increased the number of district Mobile/Community Wardens schemes by 7 and 20 are now operating across the district. The schemes support elderly residents to live in their homes for longer. Each scheme employs a warden who helps the service user by lending practical support through shopping for essentials, collecting prescriptions, filling out forms and administrative tasks and with emotional support of a daily phone call and a weekly visit to the home which hopefully once again will soon incorporate a cup of tea and a chat on the sofa. These schemes continue to be invaluable in supporting some of our most vulnerable residents.

### **Covid Business Grants**

As of 9/4/21 SCDC has paid out a total of **£11,159,317** in Government business grants to **4,653** businesses since November.

SCDC has paid **£3,889,284** out of their £4,594,889 discretionary/hardship allocation to 1,469 South Cambs businesses and we are awaiting details of what further monies we can expect and what activities and businesses it will be able to help.

We have very recently received **£5.8 million** of re-start grant money for all closed businesses. **It will go live on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April.** We will contact businesses for them to update details/reconfirm eligibility. For any new businesses who have not applied previously, look out for an application link on the website.

We continue to do everything we can to support all businesses regardless of their size or turnover through our website, our newsletter and by direct contact with our expert business support team - we have advised a staggering 2000 businesses over the past 12 months.

On top of this we have been running a series of 7 Business Webinars and are planning 7 more with the one in July entitled Rebuilding the Greater Cambridge Supply Chain post Covid.

It will focus on the Food and Drinks sector and so should be of great interest to our pubs, restaurants and takeaways. Further information to follow.

The business grant scheme also supports charities. I continue to be a trustee on the board of Emmaus Cambridge in Landbeach. Emmaus operates a business model where the companions help to run the business with one of its major income sources being the shop and café on site. Clearly both have had to close for long periods in the past year and with it an obvious reduction in income. Supported by grants from South Cambs and other organisations, donations, support from food charities, plus loans, and with a switch and increase to more online sales to name just one innovation, Emmaus continues its vital work. The dedication and diligence of the staff is phenomenal. Currently the District Council is supporting Emmaus with work to install pods on site to provide more independent accommodation. More to follow on this during 2021.

### **Business rates relief**

On 25 March, the Government announced £1.5 billion further funding for councils to provide additional targeted support to those businesses that have not already received business rates relief. The funding will be allocated to councils based on the stock of properties in the area whose sectors have been affected by the coronavirus outbreak and they will use their knowledge to make awards to local businesses. The Government will work with and support local government to enable ratepayers to apply as soon as possible this year.

### **Construction of new council housing**

We have a policy of increasing the number of council properties available for people on lower incomes and are really pleased to have built 66 new council homes in the last 12 months (the target was 50). These are built to a high specification and some of the properties have solar panels and air-source heat-pumps.

### **SCDC 5 Year Housing Land Supply.**

Prior to May 2018 SCDC did not have a 5 year housing land supply which led to a number of speculative and often inappropriate developments which were often won on appeal by developers. We have been concerned that Covid crisis might have slowed down the building of new homes and hence threatened the supply. The very good news is that the Greater Cambridge area (S Cambs and Cambridge City) can demonstrate a supply of 6.1 years as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

### **Being 'Green to our core'**

One of the main priorities for the present administration at SCDC was a commitment to being 'Green to our core'. In early 2021 we released details of our 'Doubling Nature' strategy.

Some of the projects that we have in the pipeline have, inevitably, been delayed by the coronavirus pandemic but we have still delivered on a number of our commitments:

All SCDC street lighting is being replaced by low energy LED lights. This is nearing completion and should give a reduction of 60% of energy usage and a commensurate saving in parish councils' street-lighting energy bills.

We have completed an audit of the energy efficiency of existing council housing stock and will soon begin a campaign of improvement, beginning with enhanced insulation for the poorest performing properties. This will have the dual benefit of reducing carbon emissions and helping council tenants with their fuel bills.

The 'greening' of South Cambs Hall has been delayed by Covid but should be completed in the coming year. This will retrofit renewable energy generation and energy-saving measures with the objective of reducing by up to 50% the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> used to heat and light the council's home (with commensurate cost-savings too).

We have purchased an electric bin lorry – one of the first local authorities to do so – and with an option to purchase others. The performance of the vehicle is still being evaluated but, so far, it has exceeded expectations. These vehicles have a much higher upfront cost but running costs are considerably lower and should be cost neutral over the vehicle's lifespan. There are plans to install solar PV panels (planned 2021- 22) as a renewable source of electricity to charge the vehicles, which will add to the financial case as well as the considerable environmental one.

At the start of last year, Milton was selected along with one other area in Cambridge to trial a weekly food waste collection scheme. Initially the scheme was run on a very small scale and following positive results on decomposition of the liners and good uptake, the scheme was expanded to the whole village in December 2020. We await the results of this larger pilot which hopefully will mean the scheme can be rolled out across the district.

Our Zero-Carbon Communities Grant scheme has been very successful. In the last year, almost £100,000 of grant funding has been made available to 17 parish councils and community group projects to help them with carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures. Residents are now benefitting from the cycle stands in place in the centre of Waterbeach as a result of the award made to the Cycling Campaign in the previous round of applications. In December 2020 Milton Cycling Campaign were awarded the full amount of £15 000 for cycle racks in Milton and we look forward to their installation later this year. In Waterbeach, St John's Church were also awarded the maximum amount of £15 000 to contribute towards the replacement of the boiler with an air source heat pump and the installation of solar panels to reduce the building's reliance on fossil fuels. Since last Summer

the church hall has been used as the food hub and hopefully this year other events will once again be held in the building. The scheme for 2021-22 opens on 10 May 2021 and funding will be available for community buildings, tree Planting and other initiatives to reduce carbon emissions.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/nature-and-climate-change/zero-carbon-communities/zero-carbon-communities-grant/>

### **Consultations:**

We seem to never be short of consultations but there are currently two open for comment. If you live in Waterbeach, please visit [www.waterbeachconsultation.co.uk](http://www.waterbeachconsultation.co.uk) to participate in deciding on a permanent name for the new town and also to help build a 'bank' of names for the neighbourhoods, streets and public areas as the town is built out over the next thirty years. The consultation runs until 12<sup>th</sup> May. This will be followed by a second consultation on preferred names commencing on 27<sup>th</sup> May and closing on 7<sup>th</sup> July.

To give your views on the East West Rail consultation please visit [eastwestrail.co.uk](http://eastwestrail.co.uk) Although a Southern route has been selected it is still important to take part, as there is a lot of lobbying by residents in the South of the district for a Northern route through Landbeach and Milton.

### **Remote Meetings.**

It just beggars belief that the Government cannot find a way to allow the continuation of remote council meetings for County, District, Town and Parish Councils. Moving to remote meetings has allowed all of us to protect our councillors, our officers and the public which is surely just as important now as it was 12 months ago. Very few councils will have large enough spaces to allow all of the elected members to participate in meetings whilst at the same time socially distancing. On top of this we have seen increased participation from members of the public in our meetings many of whom may not have been able to attend meetings prior to the pandemic and it would be awful to now have to tell them they cannot participate from home and can only do so in person. To add to the lunacy it now appears that having told us that the 'remote meeting' ship had sailed, government is now going to 'consult on this'. It is now very much a matter of watch this space!

Please continue to stay safe and stay well. If you want to get in touch, please email Anna or myself at either [Cllr.Bradnam@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Bradnam@scambs.gov.uk) or [Cllr.Rippeth@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Rippeth@scambs.gov.uk)

*Cllr Anna Bradnam & Cllr Judith Rippeth*