

## Clerk report to Bourn parish Council 17 June 2015

Where I have information to support the agenda this is detailed below.

1. Apologies for absence – None at the time of writing.
  
3. To approve the minutes of the meeting on 20 May – attached.
  
- 5.2 SCDC Decision notices
  - 5.2.1 S/0091/15/FL – 6 Baldwin’s Close – First floor extension above existing garage conversion and external alterations – Permission refused.
  - 5.2.2 S/0703/15/LD – 5 Gills Hill – Certificate of lawful use – occupation by persons other than those employed in agriculture and their dependents, cond. on Planning Permission C/0342/51 – Permission granted.
  - 5.2.3 S/0330/15/FL – Golders Farm, Fox Road – Replace existing outbuilding – Permission granted.
  - 5.2.4 S/0836/15/VC – 71 Caxton End – Demolition of existing dwelling and 5 outbuildings and erection of replacement detached chalet bungalow, variation of Condition 2 of planning consent S/1536/14/FL to allow for replacement of one rooflight to the north facing roof slope with a double height rooflight, and the retention of existing garage - Permission granted.
  
- 6.1 To receive the financial report and approve the payment of bills – attached.
- 6.2 Play inspection report – attached.

The access boundary issued raised by Mr Haxton at a previous meeting. A copy of the Parish Council’s lease is attached. It states the Council is responsible for the fencing. The Parish Council is not responsible for anything on the adjacent public right of way as that rests with either the County Council if it is a surface matter or adjacent landowners if it is an overhanging vegetation or other fencing matter.

7. Members’ reports and items for information only unless specified

### 7.3 Allotments

Cllr Rolfe writes:

I’ve had a complaint, wearing both PC and SCDC hats, from one of the bungalows which back onto the allotments about the amount of weeds growing along the fence along the ditch on that edge of the area. Should the Allotments Association be keeping it clear or, since the whole field is still the property of SCDC, is the ditch and its sides, their responsibility?

If there are no specifics about it then we need to discuss it at the next PC meeting or take advice from SCDC. If the Allotments Association should be keeping it clear then I’m quite happy to talk to them as PC liaison.

Reading the lease it would seem (item 5a) that the PC are responsible for the ditch area.

### 8.1 Resident request that son picks litter for Duke of Edinburgh Scheme

A resident has asked whether his son could carry out a weekly hour (on average) of litter picking as his voluntary activity for the gold Duke of Edinburgh award. The family have offered to provide bin bags and suggest areas to focus on. Julie Maclean has indicated that she would be willing to provide some guidance and has mentioned that there are some hotspots for fly-tipping too, and if the rubbish could just be gathered together, the council could come and collect. She suggests either that she provides the number to call or the litter picker can inform her when and where it is, and that she can make suggestions from time to time about where to go. The resident has indicated that if the Parish Council is agreeable, the litter picking could be for as long as 12 months at an average of an hour a week, and has offered a starting date of the end of June. The confirmation of Comberton Village College that they are in agreement with the suggestion would also need to be obtained.

## 8.2 Cambridgeshire Police – Operation Oaklands Smart Water signs

Since December last year, officers from Cambridgeshire (South Cambs. area) have been conducting security patrols across various South Cambridgeshire villages, checking for insecurities at homes and outbuildings. They have also been offering security advice and devices such as shed alarms and SmartWater domestic property marking kits to residents at cost or reduced price. SmartWater crime reduction initiatives have been used by police forces for some time to combat burglary and theft and the product has a strong track record in reducing crime, see [www.smartwater.com](http://www.smartwater.com)

For further details regarding the South Cambs. police operation see Op Oaklands [www.southcambscops.org](http://www.southcambscops.org)

To re-enforce the message to potential criminals the force has purchased a number of street signs bearing the SmartWater logo (plus Police Crest and South Cambs. District Council logo) to be displayed in a high footfall area within each village included in the Operation, such as on a main village green or main road route used to enter/ drive through the village. Ideally the sign should be placed on lamp post that has few or no signs on it (no more than 3m square in total for each lamp post, including existing signs) and it should be placed above shoulder height to reduce vandalism and tampering (approx. 8ft). The signs are a similar size to Neighbourhood Watch signs.

I would appreciate your assistance with putting the sign up for your village. The signs are quite simple to put up and come with bands and fixings.

Please do contact me, and I will arrange for the sign to be sent out to you.

Kind regards

**Rachel Carr**

**Crime Reduction Officer (South Cambs)**

## 8.3 SCDC – Community Infrastructure Levy potential improvements

One issue that the District and Parish Council face is that the Government has now restricted Councils from securing what they term ‘pooled contributions’. Put simply, if we have more than 5 developments contributing towards a type of infrastructure since April 2010 then we cannot have any more after 6th April 2015.

This affects (i) indoor community facilities and (ii) open space contributions that we historically have passed on to Parish Councils.

One possible solution to this is that rather than the legal agreement referring to these contributions as being generic ‘offsite open space’ (for example) that we actually identify a clear project in the village where the money would be directed. It could therefore be argued (although I am not sure how confident we are on this if tested through the courts) that this contribution may not be considered in the same manner as the previous 5 or more generic contributions. I hope you are with me so far.

Essentially the Council needs to know what specific plans there are in the village for improving the **village hall** or **any** similar indoor community facility. We would also need to know the timetable for the works and any information on costs etc.

Please do use this as an opportunity to raise any other infrastructure requirements that the Parish Council considers necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

I hope this makes sense and that you are able to assist with this. Please do not hesitate to contact me via phone or e-mail if you have any questions.

## 8.4 CCC – Consultation on the revision of Cambridgeshire’s Strategy for Flood Risk Management

Under the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) Cambridgeshire County Council has a duty to produce a strategy in partnership with key stakeholders involved in flood risk management. Cambridgeshire's Strategy for Flood Risk Management was written in 2012, and since then it has been an important tool in helping everyone understand and manage flood risk within the county.

The strategy is now due to be updated to reflect changes in legislation that have happened since 2012. The main updates are the inclusion of more accurate information on areas of significant risk from surface water flooding, and information on the County Council's new role as a statutory consultee in the planning process, in relation to surface water flood risk.

It is important that the updated sections of the strategy are developed in partnership with communities to enable us to make the best use of the limited resources we have available.

The Council has launched a public consultation that will run for six weeks from the **3rd of June 2015 to 14th July 2015** and is seeking your views on the content of the updated sections of the strategy. We are taking the strategy to as many forums as possible – such as local authorities, town and parish councils. We will also make the full strategy available on our web pages, in City and District Council offices, and in local libraries.

Once we have everyone's comments, we will update the relevant sections of the strategy and the action plan. The final version will be published at the end of the year.

Whether you live in an area that is thought to be a risk of flooding, or not, your views are still important and we hope that you will take this opportunity to get involved and continue to shape the future of how we manage flood risk in Cambridgeshire.

Please take some time to fill in the online questionnaire by **14th July 2015**.

**The draft strategy and online questionnaire can be found here:**

[http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/site/custom\\_scripts/cons\\_details.aspx?ref=369](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/site/custom_scripts/cons_details.aspx?ref=369)

If you would like a copy of this document and/or the draft Strategy on audio cassette, Braille, large print or in other languages please contact us: telephone: 01223 703894, or email:

[floodandwater@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:floodandwater@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

## **Other useful information related to Flood Risk Management**

### Maintenance of ordinary watercourses

Householders or businesses whose property is adjacent to a river or stream or ditch are likely to be riparian owners with maintenance responsibilities. If a property backs onto a river or stream then the owner is likely to be a riparian owner and own the land up to the centre of the watercourse. Riparian owners have a responsibility to maintain the bed and banks of the watercourse and ensure there is no obstruction, diversion or pollution of the watercourse. Full details can be found in Cambridgeshire County Council's 'The rights and responsibilities of a riparian owner' [http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/336/riparian\\_owner\\_factsheet](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/336/riparian_owner_factsheet)

### Reporting flooding problems

Officers from risk management authorities are not in a position to know about every flooding incident that occurs, particularly those which do not lead to flooding within properties. However records of flood incidents which affected roads or entered the boundaries of properties are important to record. They can indicate that there has been extensive flooding from relatively regular rainfall events which would warn that the properties are at risk in more extreme rainfall events. This information is crucial in building up cases for flood defence and flood resilience schemes which will require strong evidence of the flood risk to properties. Flooding from

overflowing drains and gullies can be reported to highways online:

<http://www2.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/HighwaysReports/Highways/ReportProblem1.aspx>

District and parish councils and community groups and residents in areas which suffer from non-urgent local flooding (i.e. from surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses) can report flood incidents online using Cambridgeshire County Council's interactive map.

[https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/site/xfp/scripts/xforms\\_form.aspx?formID=48&language=en](https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/site/xfp/scripts/xforms_form.aspx?formID=48&language=en)

#### Funding flood risk management schemes

The County Council actively seeks grant funding to help fund flood risk management schemes that meet the Government's funding criteria. Some schemes will not meet the criteria set, but there are still opportunities to move these schemes forward. Under the Localism Act town and parish councils have been given the General Power of Competence, and can now spend money on flood alleviation schemes under the Section 137 limits. This means that parish councils can have a part to play in partnership funding contributions for flood alleviation schemes in the future. Town and parish councils are also able to apply for Public Works loans, at preferential rates, to enable them to contribute to more comprehensive flood risk management schemes.

Please feel free to contact the flood and water team if you have any questions regarding any of the above information.

Yours faithfully

**Flood and Water Team**

#### 8.5 Residents – management of roadside hedges

“Should any of you be wondering how the hedge at the bottom of the High Street came to be cut back we are writing to let you know that we were responsible. As you must know many older frail people and young families use this footpath every day. The pathway had become exceedingly dangerous as it was impossible to walk alongside another adult or child, or a push chair, indeed it was not possible for one person alone to avoid the overhanging branches and brambles. Whilst appreciating that it is the Highways not Parish Council responsibility we are not convinced that would have afforded any comfort should an accident have occurred .

The hedge needs cutting back further but this was beyond our equipment. This would permit maximum use of the footway without the grass bank being cut back. It would also build some resilience into the situation as there would be some space to accommodate the summer growth without returning to the dangerous situation that has existed lately. The top should be reduced too to prevent some parts turning into trees, adding their own maintenance problems in the future as branches hang down and are difficult to prune. Regular annual maintenance will be a much cheaper long term solution once the correct profile is established, whoever pays the bill.

Concern about the state of this overgrown hedge has been expressed to yourselves during 2015 and yet it still has been allowed to get to a very serious and dangerous state of overgrowth. We understand that the primary responsibility for keeping roadside public rights of way clear for safe use lies with the Highways Authority, but we assume that you had already requested that this be done.

As this maintenance was not done when it should have been, we therefore expect that in such circumstances you would have exercised your powers under Section 43 of the Highways Act 1980. This confers upon you the power to maintain any footpath within the parish which is itself maintainable at the public expense. This does not absolve the Highways Authority from carrying

out their duty but, in our view, it does give you the power to take action where they fail to respond to your requests and you deem that the work is necessary.

Surely, the obvious danger to parishioners in this instance, particularly the very young and those with walking difficulties, would have persuaded you that this was a deserving case for immediate and emergency action. We hope very much that you do not allow such a situation to occur again.

We are sure you are aware that there other places in the village where lack of hedge maintenance is causing similar problems. For example we would like to draw to your attention the Caxton End hedge along the Kingfisher Close rear gardens which was specifically retained at the Planning stage in order to preserve the appearance of Caxton End. Otherwise there would have been a muddle of disparate types of fences. This has already started happening. This hedge has not had its annual cut either. Some people walk on the hedge side of Caxton End to be on the 'right' side of the road and they are increasingly in the bramble wands. It is not yet critical but it does mean that the road is getting narrower and of course if no action is taken the structure of the hedge eventually gets lost. We ask you to put the necessary pressure on the Highways Authority to put these matters right."