

## South Cambridgeshire District Councillors' Report to Parish Councils April 2017

On 04 May Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will take the historic step of electing the first Mayor of the Combined Authority which Government has now approved. The **Devolution Deal** is described as being the most generous deal in the country and will see the allocation of £20m a year for the next 30 years to support economic growth, infrastructure and jobs.

As the first Devolution Deal was negotiated South Cambridgeshire District Council played a lead role in also seeking and securing £100m to accelerate the building of affordable homes. These will be built on already identified sites across the county but with emphasis on the very high need locally.

A shadow Combined Authority Board has been formed in advance of the election of the Mayor and has approved some of the governance structures necessary to make sure that public resources are allocated in a legal, efficient and effective way.

There are ambitions for road improvements such as dualling of the A10 and rail investment that will unblock Ely North Junction, provide new rolling stock and strengthen the case for a new station at Addenbrookes. In addition to these and the accelerated affordable housing provision, the area will also gain local control of the skills and apprenticeships budget that will offer opportunities for our young people.

The next stage of this handover of powers from Whitehall is already being worked up and will extend to community safety [including police and fire services] and integrating local health and social care services.

**Council** met once but held two extraordinary meetings in April.

At the first of the two those councillors present voted unanimously to approve the appointment, subject to a six month probationary period, of Beverly Ann Agass as Chief Executive Officer and Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for South Cambridgeshire District Council. Ms Agass has over 20 years experience in local government in Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire and has most recently served for eight years as Chief Executive, South Kesteven District Council.

The salary for her new position will be £122,969 per annum and the only other remuneration that she will receive will be Returning Officer fees. The Returning Officer is the person who has overall responsibility for the conduct of elections. The Returning Officer is an officer of the Council who is appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983. Although appointed by the Council the role of the Returning Officer is one of a personal nature and is distinct and separate from their duties as an employee of the Council. Elections fees for these additional duties are paid separately to salary. The fees for Parliamentary, Police Commissioner, Combined Authority Mayoral and Euro Elections are set by Government. Fees for local elections are set locally and are currently £373.72 per contested ward and £55.20 per uncontested ward.

Full details: <http://bit.ly/2pKQwhC>

At the second meeting councillors voted to approve the delegation of power to Cambridge City Council to determine an application for variation of an operational permit held by Marshalls, Cambridge. This was required because of a situation where Marshalls who has operated for many years within the City's boundary, has expanded an existing process across that boundary into SCambs. The process has previously been regulated by Cambridge City Council due to its containment within the City boundary. Recent innovation has meant that the process can now be extended to other hangars within the airport site and will allow for small areas of aircraft to be sprayed following routine maintenance operations. The transfer of power to the City to allow them to regulate the part of the process that will as a result take place in SCambs had been suggested to reduce red tape. Full details: <http://bit.ly/2oUEwFr>

Members of **Cabinet** considered the Council's responses to three consultations. The first two both related to housing and planning, one being on the long awaited White Paper "Fixing our Broken Housing Market" and the other on "Planning and Affordable Housing for Build to Rent". Endorsement was given, subject to minor changes, to both a joint response with Cambridge City Council and an individual response, where the views of the councils were dissimilar, to the White Paper consultation and an individual response to the Build to Rent consultation.

The third consultation response approved was that relating to the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Route Options. The Council supports the principle of the upgrade of this route which in turn supports delivery of the national, regional and local growth agenda. Its support is for the Orange Route Option providing it includes grade separated junctions at Cambridge Road/B1428 and Caxton Gibbet/AA1198. Its support is also provisional upon any final alignment and confirmation that the existing A428 will be retained as a local road and that the new road will not sever existing minor roads connecting villages either side of the proposed alignment. Full details: <http://bit.ly/2oXEK94>  
Housing White Paper: <http://bit.ly/2lqPlgP>

There were no applications of direct local interest on the agenda for April's meeting of **Planning Committee**. One 5 year land supply application, resubmission of a previously refused application currently at appeal [up to 70 dwellings in Swavesey] was again refused. Full details: <http://bit.ly/2qrKheA>

**Environmental Services:** The first few bin collections since the changes were made to rounds and thus to collection days provoked a flurry of communications from residents which were dealt with by a specialist contact centre. The changes were further complicated by the plethora of public holidays that we enjoy at this time of the year but overall the changeover seems to have gone well. The yellow signs are in the process of being removed.

I have already received notification of a couple of local applications for grants from the Community Chest. Please don't forget that this opened again for applications from the beginning of April.

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