

Final South Cambridgeshire District Council Report from Cllr Douglas de Lacey

As readers may know, I had intended at this meeting last year to announce my resignation from SCDC, having fulfilled my 2-year term as Chairman. That was not to be, but I am now no longer your Councillor though I served another year. I have reported my work as your Councillor in my monthly contributions to GPN, so I can be brief.

I had to steer the Council through the very different method of working which lockdown forced on us, from seeing most of our officers working from home to chairing remote meetings with separate computers for the meeting and the agenda. We found, not too surprisingly, that many officers were putting in more hours as a result of home-working, sometimes in very difficult circumstances, and we did our very best to alleviate that. Officers have worked wonders, though the lack of a colleague at the next desk has meant that some mistakes have slipped through.

Apart from covid-19 the big issue throughout the year has been planning. While we are developing a ground-breaking Local Plan with emphasis on sustainability; the Government is trying to ease planning law in favour of development which I fear, despite the rhetoric, will lead to much less local input into planning decisions I helped formulate the Council's response and sent my own criticising many of the proposals. Through the Joint Development Control Committee, which I chaired until its demise in July 2020 I have fought for the best possible conditions for Girton both in Eddington (half of which is in our Parish) and at the Darwin Green site.

Though I was not involved in the decision it was great to see the new electric refuse truck emptying my blue bin. The initial cost was very high but the total cost of ownership is expected to be less than that of its diesel equivalents. There is also an ongoing plan to 'green' the Council headquarters at Cambourne.

As I stand down I would like to say that all of my period as a Councillor has been a pleasure and a privilege, and with all its challenges and frustrations the last year has been a good one. I thank you all for your support.

Douglas de Lacey, April 2021