

Girton Parish Council

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Minutes of the Meeting of Girton Parish Council on Wednesday 18th May 2011 at St Vincent's Close Community Centre at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllrs de Lacey (in the Chair), Bromwich, Cockley, Godby, Gordon, Hiley (from Item 11/60.2), Johnson, Martin, Noble, Taylor, Thorrold and Ziobro.

In attendance:

County Councillor Reynolds and District Councillor Bygott (to item 11/60.3).
John Burridge (Clerk), Natalie Stone (PFO) and one member of the public.

11/55

To elect the Parish Council Chairman for 2011/12

The Chairman opened the meeting and then handed over its conduct to the Clerk to carry out the election of a new Chairman. The Clerk asked for nominations and Cllr de Lacey was nominated by Cllr Gordon and seconded by Cllr Cockley. The Clerk asked for any other nominations and Cllr Clift then read out a prepared statement. He had been asked to stand against Cllr de Lacey, as some Councillors felt that the Council was not running smoothly, due to internal tensions and these had to be resolved for the benefit of the community. He asked Cllr de Lacey to accept that there had been concerns and to make the necessary changes to ensure that matters improved. Upon receiving Cllr de Lacey's agreement that he was amenable to change, Cllr Clift stated that he would not stand. Cllr de Lacey was therefore elected with six in favour and six abstentions. A copy of Cllr Clift's statement will, at his request, be appended to the Minute book.

11/56

Chairman signs Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Chairman then signed the Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by the Clerk

11/57

Welcome from the Chairman:

The Chairman welcomed members, County Councillor Reynolds and District Councillor Bygott.

11/58

Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Cllr. Garner as she was abroad on business and the Chairman accepted her reason.

11/59

Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda:

Cllr Godby as a Trustee of the Village Institute and Cotton Hall, Cllr Taylor as a Trustee of the Village Institute, and Cllr Gordon as a Trustee of the Girton Town Charity in respect of Item 11/63.3 (below)..

11/60

Public Participation session on agenda items and matters of mutual interest:

1. Members of the public.

One member of the public was present, who did not wish to speak.

2. County Councillor's report (Cllr Reynolds' report attached at Appendix A)

Councillor Reynolds was asked about the leaflet on the busway which contained

inaccurate dates. He confirmed that matters were now progressing and that work had been commissioned to bring the busway up to a standard where it could be operated. Dates would be published by the bus company and the County Council's cabinet would publish the cost figures. When asked about the speed limits on the A1307 road and others, Cllr Reynolds reported that the review was underway and that County would impose any changes that were found necessary. However, it was open to communities to request that limits be reduced even further and such further limits would be funded by the communities themselves. Meanwhile County was still looking for funding to impose the new limit on the Huntingdon Road. Cllr de Lacey noted that Officers' unreasonable demands for street furniture would make community changing of limits unworkable in practice and asked about the scheme which claimed that it would "revolutionise transport and make it easier to catch a bus." He pointed out that there had been an overall reduction in the number of buses and that last service had been cut. Cllr Reynolds said that £250,000 had been granted by Government towards rural transport and the new leader of the County Council had stated that a Council priority was to improve services across the whole county. Cllr Reynolds was thanked for his comprehensive report..

3. District Councillors' reports (*Cllr de Lacey's report attached at Appendix B*)

District Councillor Bygott reported that the annual Tenants' Tidy Garden Competition was seeking nominations. The closing date was 10th June.

He noted that the Council has introduced an online facility for residents to manage their Council Tax. Anyone interested should contact SCDC.

Cllr Bygott asked that the Parish Council should consider the land between Wellbrook Way and the NIAB as a potential open space and recreational area. He felt that this would protect the village against future development and suggested that the strip could be planted up as either woodland or as a community orchard. Cllr Taylor confirmed that he was very interested in the possibility of the orchard and Cllr Bygott replied that there was support from SCDC. Communities would acquire the land and provide the volunteers and SCDC would provide expert advice and the trees for planting. Cllr Bygott concluded by saying that he had spoken with the portfolio holder at SCDC and that Cllr Howell had confirmed that he would take no formal decision until he had heard from Girton Parish Council.

4. Police Report:

The police representatives were both unavailable due to shift patterns and had sent their apologies via the Clerk. The latest e-cops report detailing the crimes reported during the past month was circulated to members. A copy will be appended to the minute book. Cllr Godby reported that she had attended the Liaison Pane meeting at Swavesey the previous evening. Because of the village's connection with Impington, there had been an oversight regarding police visits to Girton organisations. It was hoped that police would visit and talk to the school, brownies and cubs etc in the near future.

Cllrs Reynolds and Bygott left the meeting at this point.

11/61 To confirm minutes of the Parish Meeting of 14th April 2011.

Proposed: Cllr. Thorrold **Seconded:** Cllr. Gordon

Cllr Godby complained that the minutes of the April meeting had not been circulated previously and were incomplete. The Chairman then read out the missing portion of the minutes.

Approved: 5 in favour. **Abstentions:** 7

11/62 Matters arising from the Minutes:

Cllr de Lacey said that although the Parochial Church Council had not so far written formally, he was aware that they would object to dog being walked through part of the

burial ground. Notices would be posted to advise dog owners of this. In respect of Item 11/54, he had received a report from the PFO and he would circulate this in due course.

11/63

Business items requiring a decision or consideration by the Council:

1. To elect a Vice Chairman for 2011/12.

The Chairman confirmed that Cllr Cockley had agreed to stand as Vice Chairman.

Proposed: Cllr de Lacey **Seconded:** Cllr Bromwich

Approved: 8 in favour. 2 abstentions

2. To agree and appoint to the proposed Standing Committees for 2011/12 as follows: (The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are ex-officio members of all standing committees).

- a) Planning Applications Committee:
Cllrs. Taylor, Gordon, Ash, Martin, and Thorrold.
- b) Sport and Recreation Ground Committee
Cllrs. Godby, Johnson, Noble, Thorrold, and Ziobro.
- c) Environment Committee
Cllrs. Ash, Bromwich, Gordon, Martin and Noble.
- d) Finance Committee
Cllrs. Godby, Martin, Taylor and Thorrold,.
- e) Planning & Resource Committee
Cllrs. Garner, Martin, Noble, Taylor and Thorrold.

3. To appoint trustees, representatives, and advisors, if necessary, for 2011/12:

- a) Girton Town Charity Trustees
The next vacancy would occur in 2012
- b) Girton Village Institute Trustees
There was one vacancy that would fall due at any time
- c) Cotton Hall Trustees
There were two vacancies and although an approach had been made, no response had been received. Any Councillor interested was urged to contact Alice Few.
- d) Youth Work Liaison Officer
Cllr. De Lacey proposed that Cllr Johnson should again be appointed. This was seconded by Cllr Ziobro and approved unanimously.
- e) Representative on CPALC
Cllr Godby proposed that she should remain as the CPALC representative. This was seconded by Cllr Martin and approved unanimously.
- f) Police Liaison Officer
Cllr Godby agreed to remain in post. Seconded by Cllr Martin and Approved unanimously.
- g) Public Rights of Way Liaison Officer

Cllr Bromwich proposed that he remain as Liaison Officer. Seconded by Cllr Martin and approved unanimously

h) Recycling Officer

It was agreed that this post had become redundant and no appointment was necessary.

i) Warden of Town End Close

George Thorpe had agreed to stand again. Proposed by Cllr de Lacey and seconded by Cllr Bromwich. Approved unanimously.

j) Tree Office

The re-appointment of Colin Carr was proposed by Cllr de Lacey and seconded by Cllr Bromwich. Approved unanimously.

k) Health and Safety Advisor

Graham Clare had indicated that he was prepared to stand again. Proposed by Cllr de Lacey, seconded by Cllr Godby. Approved unanimously.

l) Child Protection Advisor

Cllr Cockley indicated that she would agree to continue. Proposed by Cllr de Lacey, seconded by Cllr Ziobro. Approved unanimously.

4. That the following subscriptions be renewed for the year 2011/12: CPALC; Local Council Review, CPRE; CACRE & SLCC.

Cllr de Lacey proposed that all existing subscriptions be renewed. This was seconded by Cllr Gordon. Approved with one abstention.

5. To approve a formal request (to be circulated) for the transfer of the SCDC holding at Wellbrook Way to the Parish Council as recreational space.

Cllr de Lacey tabled a proposed response from the Clerk (attached at Appendix D)

Proposed: Cllr de Lacey

Seconded: Cllr Martin

Cllr Godby felt that the proposed space was an awkward shape and Cllr Noble gave it as her opinion that it would be impossible to access. The Chairman replied that the extra space might be utilised as the car park, thereby freeing up the original site for the car park. This would allow a better arrangement of the rest of the site. Cllr de Lacey felt that there was nowhere for the teenagers to go. Cllr Taylor criticised the lack of an accurate plan of the site he felt that he must abstain from the vote as he was unclear of the rationale behind the wish to purchase the land. Cllr Hiley said that the purchase would protect the site from potential problems with future residents in the properties proposed for the land. It would safeguard the core facility of the Bowls Green and the POS. he urged members to register an interest with SCDC. He declared an interest as the Charity's land agent had already been instructed to register an interest on behalf of GTC. Cllr Martin felt that there was a potential issue for the Council if GTC were already prepared to purchase the land and that SCDC would want to maximise the income from the sale. Cllr Ash asked if there were any restrictive covenants on the land and it was confirmed that this was unclear, although SCDC had stated that there were not. He felt that the projected use of the plot as a car park might be compromised. Cllr Hiley said that if the Charity bought the land they might consider using it for the erection of further almshouses or as the site of a dedicated GTC office. It was agreed that the odd

shape of the plot would lend itself to its use for planting up a recreational woodland or community orchard. Cllr Martin asked that there be three changes to the wording of the draft letter circulated to members to simplify and clarify the request and the Chairman was happy to accede to these.
Approved: with one abstention.

6. To decide whether to accept an application for a grant for the purchase of a marquee (see Item 11/65.3 below)

Proposed: Cllr de Lacey

Seconded: Cllr Godby

Cllr Godby said that resources were stretched and thought that they should purchase their own marquee, if desired. Cllr Cockley was concerned at the cost of maintenance, storage and insurance.

Decision: 6 against, 2 in favour, 4 abstentions.

The Clerk was instructed to write to them informing them that the application was refused.

7. To approve instructions to a planning barrister or solicitor to advise on the wording of the S106 Agreement in respect of Wellbrook Way and, particularly, whether Taylor Wimpey has fulfilled its obligations under the terms of the Agreement:

Proposed: Cllr de Lacey

Seconded: Cllr Ash

Cllr de Lacey suggested that a limit of £1,000 be imposed. It would cost £250 + VAT per hour to obtain advice. It was felt that this was money that should not needlessly be expended. Cllr Martin proposed an amendment that the matter should be deferred to the next meeting and that, meanwhile, the Council should approach SCDC for clarification.

Also, the Council should seek pro bono advice from a retired lawyer, if possible.

Approved: Unanimously.

11/64

Finance & Resource Management:

1. To approve payments from 17th March to 20th April 2011:

Proposed: Cllr Gordon

Seconded: Cllr Godby

Approved: 8 in favour. 2 abstentions

2. To approve the Balance Sheet:

Proposed: Cllr de Lacey

Seconded: Cllr Thorrold

Approved: 5 in favour. 5 abstentions.

3. To receive the finance report from 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011

The Finance Report was duly received

4. To approve the Annual Return:

The Chairman said that this would have to be deferred. The PFO reported that the Internal Auditor had been unable to carry out his function in time and that the External Auditor had agreed to an extension.

11/65

Correspondence received:

The following correspondence has been circulated to all Councillors.

1. Letter re parking at Duck End.
2. Email re bus shelter
3. Email re Girton 5K race.
4. Email from CCC re update on Parish Paths Scheme
5. Email from SCDC re South Cambs SHLAA
6. Email from Transport Data Collection re traffic survey.

7. Letter re planters.

11/66 To receive reports:

1. Chairman's Report (Appendix C)

Received.

2. Girton Town Charity:

Cllr Hiley said that there was nothing of significance to report. It was hoped to go to tender for the almshouses this summer and the Charity was looking at the possibility of development on the Abbeyfield site.

3. Footpaths and Rights of Way:

Cllr Bromwich reported that a complaint had been received by County about the state of Footpath 8. He had checked this and a drainage ditch had been dug and a culvert built, thereby vastly improving the footpath.

11/67 To receive Committee Minutes:

There were none.

11/68 Matters raised by Councillors:

Cllr Ziobro wished fellow members to know that she felt that council business should not be dealt with exclusively by email. It was necessary that transactions be transparent.

Cllr Noble said that she was unhappy about the flower tubs, which she considered an eyesore.

Cllr Taylor expressed disappointment at the low number of residents attending the Annual Parish Meeting. He wanted efforts to be made to encourage the villagers to turn out to the next APM.

Cllr Clift raised the question of the computer systems in the Parish Office. He felt that a better package should be found for the PFO. The computers were old and were not working to best effect. He suggested that a professional firm should come in and set up new systems. He had been embarrassed at the APM that the Council had apparently been unable to answer a query from the floor about the income from the MUGA. He asked whether the Allotment Society might be approached to take control over the flower tubs. The state of the verges was awful and the contractor should be chased up. He wanted a motion on the agenda for the June meeting to discuss the matters that he had raised. He said that Councillors should be reminded two or three days before an agenda was published to let the Clerk have any Items that they wished to be included.

Cllr Ash asked members to let him have their comments on the working paper as soon as possible.

Cllr Martin had noted that the bus shelter had been vandalised and that graffiti had been daubed on it. He confirmed that he was happy to sponsor a tub this year, but expressed his dissatisfaction at the standard of last year's planting.

The meeting closed at 9.29 pm.

APPENDIX A

County Council Report May 2011 from Councillor John Reynolds

NICK CLARKE IS ELECTED LEADER OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S CONSERVATIVE GROUP

Councillor Nick Clarke has been elected as Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council's Conservative group. Cllr Clarke will be elected Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council at the Council's AGM on 17 May, succeeding Cllr Jill Tuck.

He said: "It is an honour to be elected Conservative Group Leader and I am honoured to have the opportunity to be able to serve the people of Cambridgeshire as Leader of the Council after May 17. "Succeeding Jill Tuck as Leader means I have a hard act to follow. She has led the Council and the County over the past three years with sound judgment and a sure touch.

"The public expects and demands strong, effective leadership, and I believe I have those qualities. I am confident I have the ability, the energy and the time to provide the dynamic leadership the Council and the County needs. There are significant financial challenges ahead. But it is also time to get on with the job of creating prosperity, happiness and safe, strong communities for the people of our county.

He is currently Chairman of the Council's Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee, and a member of its Local Government Shared Services Management Board. He has also been a member of Cambridgeshire Police Authority and is a former board member of Greater Cambridge Partnership and Chair of the County's Federation of Small Businesses.

BE PART OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S TRANSPORT REVOLUTION

A new scheme to revolutionise transport in Cambridgeshire could unlock tens of millions in investment, make it easier for people to catch a bus and has the potential to create new businesses. Cambridgeshire County Council is working in a cross authority partnership to see if public services can align their resources to boost local transport and business enterprise.

Once agreed, pathfinder projects could be set up in the County by autumn to provide high quality community transport that will meet the needs of residents and statutory services ranging from taking children to school to providing transport to the local doctor. These local transport groups could include franchise agreements where residents are guaranteed a high quality service and which would encourage local enterprise, business and employment opportunities. The Council is looking to set up the first pathfinder projects in areas where bus subsidies are being reduced.

Alone the County Council spends more than £20 million on providing statutory transport with extra money available for community schemes. The Council wants to see existing businesses, budding entrepreneurs and charities to step forward and grab this opportunity to take part in the scheme. Cambridgeshire Future Transport is a partnership between the County Council working with district and city council partners as well as other public services and authorities. It also has representatives from community transport and bus operators to help provide business and industry knowledge.

The initiative will:

- Ensure transport is well managed, easy to use, and delivered at a reasonable price
- Handing budgets and power to communities so that they can find local solutions to local transport needs
- Looking at an innovation fund to help local entrepreneurs and charities start up and expand local transport services
- Drive through savings for public services while providing a seamless transport service

Currently the Council spends millions of pounds on subsidising large buses that are often empty and sometimes buses and even local mini-buses are left idle through the day between pick-ups. This means there is plenty of capacity not only for improvements to be made but to create jobs and increase economic prosperity. The new scheme being developed could plough millions of pounds into the hands of local residents and businesses and co-ordinate transport across organisations to provide a much better service.

COUNCIL GETS 'GOOD' INSPECTION REPORT FOR ADULT LEARNERS

Thousands of adult learners across the whole of Cambridgeshire are getting a good service the independent watchdog Ofsted has said. The Ofsted inspection of Adult and Learning Skills, which is provided by Cambridgeshire County Council found the services provided either good or outstanding.

The service dealt with almost 13,000 either part time or full time learners between 2009 and 2010. A range of courses are provided at centres across Cambridgeshire, including academic and vocational qualifications, training for employees as well as sports, crafts, creative arts and design.

The report praised the courses, tutors and venues as well as saying: "The county council has fully acknowledged the generous benefits of adult community learning for residents of Cambridgeshire and set a very clear strategic vision for the service. Library learning centres, adult guidance service and apprenticeship schemes are under a single leadership. To ensure its future the county council has advanced plans to establish a trust."

Ofsted particularly highlighted the way in which the service had met and targeted the needs of disadvantaged learners.

The report says:

- * Learners develop high level of skills in all subject areas. They improve their confidence, skills and knowledge to a high degree and achieve their personal objectives.
- * Literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners become more independent and develop their prospects for study and employment. Learners from the most marginalised groups find direction to their lives.
- * Most learners enjoy learning and are highly satisfied. They attend regularly and complete their courses. The learning venues are easily accessible where learners feel safe and secure.
- * The quality of teaching is good with 19% outstanding lessons. Most tutors are highly experienced and practising professionals. They communicate their passion through teaching, using a range of multimedia resources.
- * The service works in close partnership with the voluntary sector and schools to meets learners needs.
- * The service has a very clear strategic direction and vision. Its arrangements to check the credentials and background of the tutors are strong. The service makes prompt changes in response to the learners and partners views. It knows its provision well. The self-assessment report is mostly accurate. The service has a good capacity to maintain strengths and deal with the areas for improvements. Value for money is good.

The report also pointed out areas where the Council could improve including in a few centres improving the quality of accommodation. It also suggested the council continues to improve the tutors and learners understanding of setting and reviewing the achievement of personal learning objectives in a few classes, so that they fully understand the importance of monitoring their own progress and individual achievement. Maintain and develop further the strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that learners on all programmes achieve well.

"Providing adults with learning opportunities is vital in helping people achieve their goals and improving their quality of life. The Council helps provide courses for thousands of residents across Cambridgeshire and we are pleased with this independent inspection which says we are doing a good job. Like all school reports we

can always do better and we will continue to strive to improve and help residents achieve their ambitions."

REDUCING ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION TO SAVE CARBON FUELS

Electricity consumption in council buildings decreased in March 2011 for six of our larger offices; five of the six show we used less electricity in March 2011 than during March 2010. Castle Court is showing the biggest decrease at -17%. These early figures suggest improvements including LED lighting, timer switches and employees being more energy aware are making a real difference. Let's make sure this reduction isn't a 'one-off' - stay vigilant and remember to switch off.

SCHOOL MEAL PRICE HELD FOR THIRD SUCCESSIVE YEAR

The price of a primary school meal will remain at £2.00 in September - the third year in a row without an increase. Cambridgeshire Catering Services (CCS), who provide school meals, increased the price of a school meal in September 2009 from £1.90 to £2.00. Managers pledged to keep the price at £2.00 for two years - and have succeeded - but have now announced that it will be kept at £2.00 for another year, until at least September 2012.

The reason prices are able to stay the same is that the number of primary school pupils taking school meals has been steadily rising. In the last three years, the proportion of pupils taking a school meal as opposed to bringing their own went up from 31.5% to 40%. During the forthcoming year CCS - which is part of Cambridgeshire County Council - will be offering parents the opportunity to pay for school meals and other school payments online.

In secondary schools, meal prices will go up in September from £2.15 to £2.20. As all secondary schools in Cambridgeshire offer a cafeteria service, the £2.20 amount will be the equivalent of an allowance against the price of a meal.

CCS already provides meals to over 200 schools across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Essex and Rutland, and has recently started providing meals to about 70 schools in Northamptonshire. A total of 17,000 children in Cambridgeshire now have a school meal every day.

ELY LIBRARY OPENS A NEW CHAPTER

Residents in East Cambridgeshire will be able to use the latest self service technology after Ely library re-opens its doors last month, following a major refurbishment. Building on the success of seven other libraries across the county, Cambridgeshire Libraries, Archives and Information has installed the popular and successful self-service technology in Ely. This helps visitors issue and return a range of items, from books to DVDs.

The new improvements also include installing a new customer service point, and rearranging the non-fiction books to incorporate the reference material, which will bring all the information on each subject together. The main entrance to the children's library has moved round to make it more secure for younger children and a new sofa, purchased by The Friends of Ely Library, for children, parents and carers to share, will be installed next month. The Teenage Library has moved to the other side of the library where there will be more space and shelving.

The local community and businesses as well as the Friends Group and library staff themselves have also come forward to help make further improvements. As a result of donations from various local sources the meeting room has had new flooring laid. Library staff have also got their brushes out and painted the meeting room and kitchen which is used by the local community.

The new self-service machines will enable customers to:

- Issue and return books, story cassettes, DVDs and CDs quickly and easily
- Check what books they already have out on loan
- Renew items
- Pay overdue and loan charges for story cassettes, DVDs and CDs

The self-service is quick and easy to use and staff will be on hand to explain how the machines work and to answer any questions.

“Where we have introduced self-service we have found it very popular with around 95 per cent of business going through the system. Ely is a very popular library and these changes will further improve facilities.

We would also like to thank the Friends of Ely Library for their kind donation as well as the local businesses and community groups who have come forward. It confirms, as we have always said, libraries are much more than places where you get books but are community hubs at the centre of local life.”

CAMBRIDGESHIRE TRANSPORT BOSSES BACK REAL TIME BUS PLANS

Plans to invest around £600,000 in improving services for bus passengers and reduce congestion have been backed by transport councillors from across the Cambridge area. This will supported plans to invest developer money into extending a scheme to provide real-time bus information equipment in Cambridge. Bus users have asked the Council to improve information on buses which encourages more people to use them and reduce congestion within the city. Real time information signs, which are already being used in the city, are similar to those used on the underground and give up to the minute details about when the next bus will be coming.

The system has encouraged people, especially commuters, to use buses rather than increase car use and therefore reduce congestion and pollution. The money is coming from developers and has been earmarked specifically to improve transport within the Cambridge area and has been supported by councillors and officers from Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. It will see new signs going up on some of the city's most busiest bus routes as well as large display screens in places were communities want to travel to, such as Addenbrooke's Hospital and the railway station.

The scheme will see an extra:

- * 23 real time information signs in Coldham's Lane, Cherry Hinton and Fulbourn area
- * 27 real time information signs in Milton, Histon and Impington and the Science Park area and a large screen display at Tesco, Milton, where a large number of people visit.
- * 32 real time information signs in the South East of the city including Mill Road and Cherry Hinton Road area as well as four large screens at well used areas such as Addenbrooke's Hospital and the Railway station.

"This extension of the real-time bus information system across the Cambridge area will help to encourage more people to use buses and reduce congestion and pollution. We have listened to our communities and bus users who have asked for more accurate information so they have much more certainty about catching their bus. We already know that these measures are successful in other parts of the City and people have asked for more. This money is coming from developers and is specifically earmarked to improve transport and has the support of councillors and officers from South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council."

£5 MILLION BID TO IMPROVE TRANSPORT IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Council chiefs have agreed a bid which could see nearly £5 million ploughed into improving transport – especially in rural areas. Cambridgeshire County Council has agreed to back the £4.981million bid for the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. If successful the money would be spent on a range of projects over the next four years, to improve transport choice. It would include improving cycling in the whole of the county

and just over £2.6 million on community transport schemes.

Schemes to encourage car sharing or alternatives to the car for commuters will also be funded. As part of improvements to community transport the bid includes setting up rail partnerships to help provide better facilities at stations that have been asked for and delivered locally. There will also be a major investment in cycling and walking in Cambridge and across the county, with new links and parking for cycles. In Cambridge the bid will look at helping to deliver the Chisholm trail as asked for by the cycling campaign as well as improving junctions and areas that currently put people off from cycling.

The proposals have been put together by Cambridgeshire County Council, the district and city councils and Cambridgeshire Horizons. “We have worked closely with partner councils and Cambridgeshire Horizons as well as listening to local residents to come up with these schemes. In particular we want to boost transport in rural areas and give residents more choice and more chance to influence what is happening locally for them. These proposals offer a range of transport improvements and we hope the Government will look at them very closely and back our bid.”

RESIDENTS GET POWER TO ALTER SPEED LIMIT

Residents will get the power to change speed limits near their homes – if they stump up cash for the work. Neighbours living in a street or village will be able to investigate putting in restrictions themselves under a new policy from Cambridgeshire County Council. It could pave the way for changes in the speed limit that would normally fail to meet the authority’s own funding criteria.

The council has taken a more flexible approach after heeding calls from communities upset they cannot get changes made despite accidents occurring. The council would be on hand to advise any group wanting to pursue a change in speed limit and the council would undertake the traffic regulation order, which would ensure a public consultation to gauge support.

Schemes would need to be advertised and people would have the opportunity to object, as is the case when the council brings in changes to speed limits. Any group which puts in speed reduction measures, such as flashing signs, would need to be responsible for the “whole life cost” of the scheme. A simple scheme involving changes to the numbers on existing signs at either end of a small village or a street, for example, could cost hundreds of pounds but a more complex scheme might cost thousands.

YOUNG PEOPLE AT SWAVESEY MAKE GREAT STRIDES TO PREVENT SMOKING

Young people at Swavesey Village College want local people to go health for leather by joining them on a 'smoke free' community walk on 8 May. The students - aged 15 - have organised the event to launch the award-winning Kick Ash programme at the college.

Kick Ash is a countywide campaign which sees young people driving forward initiatives to prevent smoking in the under 16's across Cambridgeshire. Families, friends and the community were all invited to take part in the two-mile walk to show they back the students' pledge to be smoke free.

A total of 24 students from Swavesey Village College have volunteered to work as Kick Ash mentors leading on all campaign activities. They have already worked with over 200 ten and 11-year-olds in primary schools and led work with 250 thirteen and 14-year-olds in their own school. Health Secretary and South Cambridgeshire MP Andrew Lansley applauded Kick Ash on a recent visit to Swavesey Village College and has pledged his support for the campaign. The programme also works with partner primary schools. The Kick Ash programme is supported by NHS Cambridgeshire and Cambridgeshire County Council and will visit 10 secondary schools and their partner primary schools over five years.

KEEP ON CYCLING

The blacktop surface on a cycleway planned to run alongside The Busway will now go on further, thanks to Housing Growth Funding from Cambridgeshire Horizons. Cambridgeshire Horizons originally allocated £890,000 of funding from the Housing Growth Fund (received from the Department of Communities and Local Government) to surface the path that will be used by cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders between Park Lane in Histon and Longstanton.

However, following detailed consideration of how the money will be used, there is enough to allow the cycleway to carry on all the way to Swavesey, improving the sustainable transport route. The [County Council](#) had already planned to lay a blacktop surface between Histon and Milton Road, as well on the entire southern section. The extension of the blacktop surface means crushed limestone, a surface often used on rural cycleways, will only be used between Swavesey and St Ives.

"Cambridgeshire Horizons decision to allocate funding so the blacktop can be extended to Swavesey is a real bonus for cyclists. Our framework contract looks to drive down costs and make every penny count. This has helped Horizons get more for their money. We have discussed the details with the contractors who will be carrying out this work and they are going to employ additional resources to make sure this work fits in to the other jobs we have planned and does not delay the opening. The work is due to commence as soon as the Busway is handed over, but will not delay the opening of the Busway itself.

BUSWAY HANDED OVER TO COUNTY COUNCIL

Contractors BAM Nuttall have completed the Busway project and handed over the route to Cambridgeshire County Council. Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire County Council, met with BAM Nuttall's top boss - Steve Fox - today to finalise the completion of the contract and the handover of the project.

This is the longest Guided Busway in the world, which once open, will provide a world beating service. Like everyone we look forward to seeing buses running along this high quality scheme as soon as possible. The handover of The Busway is the news residents have been looking forward to. This is the first big step towards the route opening, but I would like to remind residents that the announcement of the opening date is still some way off. We expect around 3.5 million trips per year will be made on the route once it opens and it will certainly be the best way to travel to avoid the frequent queues and congestion on the A14."

At the beginning of May the Council will begin adding a blacktop surface to the cycleway between Swavesey and Milton Road, as well as surfacing the southern section. An additional junction to help access to the Clay Farm development - funded by developers - will also be carried out.

Yours *John Reynolds*

County Councillor: John Reynolds, 4 Hollytrees, Bar Hill, CB23 8SF. john.reynolds@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX B

Report from District Councillor Douglas de Lacey
16. 5. 2011

My apologies that this report is delayed.

As I mentioned last month, I missed the last Council meeting; from the minutes not a great deal affected Girton. An explanation of the promised consultations over recycling (which never happened) was requested. The laconic response was 'that all parish councils had been e-mailed in February 2011 with details of the review'. The Council approved a modification to the JDCC which will mean that the NIAB developments (including NIAB 2, which is wholly in South Cambs) will be managed by the City's planning office. I had already argued against this, but to no effect. Cllr Kindersley moved that we spend no more money on Northstowe as there is no prospect of progress in the foreseeable future, but with a vote predictably split along party lines the motion was lost.

At the Annual Parish Meeting Tom Bygott announced that he had encouraged the PFH to think seriously about the possibility of allocating the SCDC Wellbrook land to community use. However, that was certainly not the message I had from officers on the following day, and we shall have to work quickly to change the current mindset.

The Mayfield Road application was approved by the Planning Committee. There is enough evidence of irregularity in reports of the meeting for me to wish to take this up with the administration and if necessary with the Ombudsman.

The Climate Change Working Group has had its last meeting of the year, to appraise the results of the forum I mentioned last month. CCWG has been a good talking shop and has some significant results to its credit -- most notably the Sustainable Parishes Energy Partnership -- but some of us feel that the time has now come for more concrete action. The forum was a start, and indicated clearly how important it is that the Council take a lead in encouraging and harnessing low-carbon development.

The same day I attended a forum to discuss our planning IT. The addition of a mapping module to the planning site has been a great improvement, but almost all the original problems remain (together with a few newly-discovered ones). We discovered that officers had little understanding of the specific needs of Parishes from a planning database, and much useful ground was covered. We shall of course need to monitor any resulting progress. However, the mapping module (which is much more under SCDC control than the main database) is likely to be expanded in a number of useful ways if we can get permission to add layers such as flood plains and archaeological sites. It is well worth exploring at <http://plan.scambs.gov.uk> where you will find a link to the maps.

Douglas de Lacey

APPENDIX C

Chairman's Report to Girton Parish Council
11. 5. 2011

Despite what Cllr Bygott told us at the Annual Parish Meeting, I gather from officers that the Housing PFH is determined to finalise a decision on the SCDC holding at Wellbrook Way in June. This clearly makes it difficult for the Parish Council to gather evidence for a coherent case, but I have asked officers to expedite the revaluing of the land. I have also asked for details of the encumbrances on it. A draft proposal will be circulated as soon as the Clerk and I have enough information. We shall then need to explore all possible avenues for raising funding.

Cllr Gordon's report on our meeting with Mark Nickol of Taylor-Wimpey has been circulated to Councillors. James Fisher, the SCDC S106 Officer, is adamant that interest should continue to be calculated on the commuted sums until the date of the hand-over. If legal advice is that TW reading of the 106 is plausible the Council should now move swiftly to agree to a hand-over date.

I have been in communication with James Ingram of Savill's, the agent for St John's College, and am pleased that he now sees no objection to stiles over the St John's Field fence. He is also happy to discuss with the village options for the small field at the bottom of Dodford Lane.

SCDC Planning Committee has given permission for the development of 5 flats at Mayfield Road. There appear to have been several breaches of the Council's own policies in the process, and residents of Mayfield Road are considering an appeal to the Ombudsman.

The new bus shelter has been installed at Thornton Road and several residents have already expressed their gratitude. However, the seat is not as specified and the manufacturers are being asked to rectify this.

Douglas de Lacey

APPENDIX D

Girton Parish Council

John Burridge
Clerk to the Parish Council
Telephone: (01223) 472182
Email: clerk@girton-cambs.org.uk

The Pavilion,
Girton Recreation Ground,
Cambridge Road,
GIRTON,
Cambridge, CB3 0FH.

DRAFT

Dear Councillor Howell,

1. The South Cambridgeshire District Council land at Wellbrook Way, Girton, has been valued for SCDC at '£20,000 if it were used as open space/amenity only – however this is if the site had no prospect of gaining planning consent for development. If development were limited to 2 dwellings only and the remainder used as amenity land, the value would be £125,000 on the half for development and £10,000 for the 'amenity' half.' (email to Cllr de Lacey from Jenny Clark, 16. 5. 2011).

2. The Wellbrook Way estate currently fails the SCDC criteria for available open space (email to Cllr de Lacey from Jane Green, 14. 4. 2011)

3. At its meeting of 18. 5. 2011, Girton Parish Council agreed to request South Cambridge District Council to agree the following:

(a) To undertake an independent valuation of the land by a party agreeable to both GPC and SCDC, at GPC expense.

(b) In the light of this to agree a fair price for the transfer of all or part the land to GPC, to be used as recreational space in perpetuity.

(c) To give GPC time to raise the necessary funding to purchase the land at the agreed price.

4. GPC accepts that, given the plot in question could be developed for housing, the agreed value will probably be nearer to the development value than to the recreational value but requests SCDC to agree a discount based on the need of the village for more public open space in this development.

Yours sincerely,

(John Burridge, Clerk).

STATEMENT BY CLLR. S. CLIFT

Chairmanship:

Mr Chairman and fellow Councillors. Whether it has been with your knowledge or not - it is true that I have been asked the question: "Would I stand as Chairman of Girton Parish Council this year?" My understanding is that some Councillors are unhappy with the sometimes intolerance or dogmatism with which the present Chairman conducts himself & some are concerned that there is often a lack of discussion either before by email or during meetings. I don't want go too deeply into reasons but whatever they were for this request it seems certain that there is some disquiet within the council.

If I have incorrectly summarised or have misinterpreted the situation in any way then I immediately and unconditionally apologise to all concerned. However, if you do have any concerns about the way the chairman is conducting business then it is necessary to inform him about them either directly or via the clerk. I have already informed him of my personal views and have discussed with him my intentions for this evening so that he has had some time to consider his replies. Our present chairman has worked hard over a number of years for the people of Girton and we as councillors must recognise that but being critical of his style I feel that he could be a little more sensitive to the aspirations of others.

I have no interest in standing for the post of Chairman. However, what I do have is a desire to see the Parish Council going about its business in a well organised, efficient but amicable manner making the necessary decisions to progress some of the difficult issues before it. I feel that some of the points raised by Councillor Ash in his email of 12 May are quite relevant to our present situation - so - before putting this statement together - I asked myself, whether or not there really was a problem that warranted a change of chairman? I have taken the view that some changes might be necessary.

I have had little direct contact with councillors about the chairmanship or indeed know how many of them actually have feelings about it but any Councillor could stand for the post of chairman at tonight's Council meeting simply to ensure that a vote takes place.

Having done that Councillors could use their personal vote as they wish but importantly they might abstain from voting for either candidate and by doing that a very strong signal that change is required would be sent and it would be difficult for any chairman to ignore that.

Although I have pointed out our voting option I do feel that it could be a very dangerous one. All of us are strong enough in our own ways to point out to any chairman or to any Clerk the grievances we might have about chairmanships and I feel that there is no need for a vote this evening - but - that option is available.

May I point out that a chairman has no more powers than any other councillor. He is responsible for ensuring that meetings of the parish council are run in an orderly manner and that the rules of debate are followed. We should not allow the 'tail to wag the dog' and councillors should introduce motions that determine the direction they as a whole wish the council to adopt and to do that we need discussion whether in council or outside of it with or without the chairman.

As an example we could prioritise some of the important issues before this council, the Wellbrook Way section 106 debacle is a prime example of an issue that needs our constant attention and really ought to be an agenda item every month from now until it is satisfactorily concluded. I believe we should agree every move in council and make sure it is implemented or revisited within a time scale that we lay down and that time scale should be rigidly adhered to if only for realignment. In other words perhaps we need a programme so that our objectives will not fall behind.

Mr Chairman I think it is time for change so if you are re elected unopposed, and bearing in mind what I have already said, will you have the flexibility, amiability and tolerance to expeditiously take this council in the direction that the majority may wish it to go.

We are lucky, because we have a very good team of councillors here and they may wish to plan the way the council will operate and move forward through the next council term, I hope that you will be able to accept that - and also accept that what I have said tonight is in the spirit of good working relationships within this council - we can be strong.

I ask that my statement and any reply be attached to the minutes of this meeting.

Sam Clift – Parish Councillor