

Cllrs Lorna Dupré and Mark Inskip

MONTHLY REPORT NOVEMBER 2021

Low morale at waste collection and street cleaning service

We were shocked to read in the local press reports of staff concerns at East Cambs Street Scene. Allegations included staff shortages, no pay rise, low morale, bullying, stress, mental ill health, physical injury, and enforced unpaid overtime. Whistle-blowers said street sweepers had not been out in Ely for months. A senior Council officer has denied the allegations, saying there is no record of any grievance relating to them.

East Cambs Street Scene had revenue from contracts of £2.858M in the year ending March 2021, but made a profit of just £4,412—a reduction on last year's profit which was £5,077.

Lorna told the press: "The council's waste collection and street cleaning service are paid for and used by every household in the district. We all greatly appreciate the work done by the crews of East Cambs Street Scene. They perform an important and demanding public service in all weathers, and have continued to do so throughout the pandemic, to their very great credit.

"We are shocked and concerned at the news about the very low levels of morale in the service, none of which have been reported to the relevant council committee or to members of my group. We will be requesting an urgent briefing from the director of operational services on the matters that have been raised by East Cambs Street Scene staff."

Waste vehicle delays

The Council had intended to purchase a number of new waste collection vehicles this year. However while the Government's Waste Strategy is still unclear, and lead times between order and receipt of such vehicles is around twelve months, it is now highly unlikely that any of this spending will take place in this financial year and will instead need to be carried forward into 2022/23. This is not the first time this procurement has been delayed, and it risks existing vehicles being run beyond their planned working life and becoming more expensive to maintain.

65 High Street Sutton

The Planning Committee on 3 November upheld the officers' recommendation to grant permission for the alterations proposed to the former Deli, despite representations from local residents and local councillors. The only change to

the proposal was a last-minute amendment not notified to the parish council, local councillors, or residents, to change the proposed opening times, which will be 11:00PM on Friday and Saturday, but at 9:45PM Sunday to Thursday inclusive.

On the traffic and parking problems which the application will cause, the Chair of the Planning Committee told the meeting that the situation on this stretch of the High Street was already so bad that the proposals would make no difference.

Amberlea Country Kennels & Cattery

Lorna called in the application for improvements to staff accommodation at Amberlea, which officers recommended to refuse. The Planning Committee unanimously overturned the recommendation and allowed the application.

Garden Close appeal deadline extended

The deadline for representations in the appeal by Abbey Development Ltd against refusal of reserved matters for their outline planning application (20/01169/RMM) at Garden Close has been extended to Friday 19 November.

The Planning Inspectorate's appeal reference number is APP/V0510/W/21/3275044 and the appeal will be determined on the basis of written representations.

Anyone wishing to make fresh comments, or to modify or withdraw their previous representation, can do so at <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Written representations may be made by post to:

Jonathan Alden
The Planning Inspectorate
3P Temple Quay House
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Community Land Trusts

In our last report we set out the motion on Community Land Trusts proposed at the full council meeting by Ely councillor Simon Harries and seconded by Lorna.

The motion was defeated by the majority group on the Council. Questions remain about the Council's approach to Community Trusts, including the tangled web of conflicting interests, the privileged access to planning permission, the use of Combined Authority funding under the previous Mayor, and above all the way in which it has divided communities.

Pop-up food van licensing

During Covid the Council has received a large number of enquiries about permission to locate pop-up food vans. This is not adequately covered in the Council's current licensing policies. The Licensing Committee is therefore being asked at its meeting on Wednesday 10 November to agree a new policy to enable pop-up food van owners to apply for consents to trade on private land.

Committee chair resignation

We were surprised to read that the Chair of the Council's Operational Services Committee has resigned. The resignation was not notified to councillors, but an item to appoint a replacement appeared on the agenda of the next meeting of the committee on Monday 15 November.

Parking enforcement

The Council discussed its plans to leave on-street parking enforcement in the hands of the police. Amended recommendations to the full council meeting relegated the Council's role to just 'supporting' the 'Cambridgeshire Police Pilot Scheme' and its proposed targeting of 'hot spots'. Superintendent James Sutherland who attended the meeting was extremely impressive, but he will be relying on between four and six part time community volunteers to solve the problem.

The Council rejected a call from Liberal Democrat councillors to investigate Civil Parking Enforcement, the system used by nearly every other council in England to tackle illegal on-street parking.

Local Plan 'Single Issue Review' consultation

The Council has agreed to proceed with the next phase of public consultation into its Single Issue Review of its current (2015) Local Plan. The consultation will take place between December and February. The review will be considering only the policy GROWTH 1, which contains outdated housing requirement numbers.

Community Infrastructure Levy list

The Council has approved changes to its list of projects eligible to receive funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy paid by developers. Completed projects have been removed, and a number of new projects added. These are:

- A14 improvements (the Council agreed to pay £1M towards the recent works over the next twenty-five years and this is now starting to fall due)
- Health provision across the district

- Community facilities across the district
- Water management and flood prevention

Sutton GP surgery remains on the list in its own right at a maximum £56,621.63.

Meet your councillors

We will be holding our virtual surgery via Zoom from 6:30 to 7:30PM on

- Tuesday 9 November 2021
- Tuesday 7 December 2021

Please contact Mark at mark@markinskip.org.uk to book your timeslot.

Cllr Lorna Dupré

Cllr Mark Inskip

District Councillors for the Sutton ward