

**SWAFFHAM PRIOR ANNUAL VILLAGE ASSEMBLY  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at 7.30PM**

**Present:** Parish Councillors: John Covill (Chairman), Andrew Camps, Peter Hart, Paul Latchford and David Greenfield plus 11 members of the public.

**Apologies:** Cllr Allen Alderson, Cllr David Brown, Steve Kent-Phillips, Sandra Gynn, Emma Fletcher, Michael Limb.

**In Attendance:** Paul Catling, Karen King (Clerk & Supporting Clerk)  
Jamie Wilding - Senior Development Manager, Hill Residential, Phil Wise – Project Manager, Hill Residential

**Chairman John Covill welcomed everyone to the meeting.**

**Presentation by Hill Residential on Development at Rogers Road:**

Jamie Wilding presented a progress report on the Rogers Road Development. They expected the first property to be completed would be the show home, 6 to 8 weeks ahead, by February 2016. Sales launch by August. John Chalmers asked about the CLT properties. JW suggested only 50% would be occupied until all the CLT properties are handed over. CLT properties were expected by Christmas 2015 and the signs would be on site for the CLT properties in the next few weeks. Bidwells are the selling agent with local advertising but the main marketing for them is their Web site. Phil Wise asked that if anyone noticed problems to report them.

**Report from Community Land Trust**

*JC thanked Jamie Wilding and Phil Wise for attending the meeting.*

**Approval of Minutes from Meeting – 28<sup>th</sup> May 2014:** The minutes were agreed by all as a correct record.

**County Councillor's Annual Report:** (*The Clerk read Cllr David Brown's report to the meeting.*)

2014 – 2015 saw the County Council move from a cabinet system of governance to a Committee structure. This change has required much closer working between the political groups to deliver on behalf of the people of Cambridgeshire. Overall, I believe the move has proved positive. I had the honour of been appointed vice-Chairman of the new Children and Young People Committee, a role I have enjoyed immensely. I also sat on a number of committees and other bodies including: The General Purposes Committee; Constitution and Ethics Committee; Corporate Parenting Board; Cambridgeshire Social Care Improvement Board and panels to recommend sponsors to run new schools in Ely, Godmanchester, Hampton and Littleport.

Wrestling with the financial challenges of ever increasing demand and tightening budgets saw the Full Council proposing a Council Tax increase of 1.99%, whilst still delivering savings of £29.8 million in the coming year. This is in addition to the £115.3 million of savings delivered over the past 3 years. Looking back over the year we have made good progress in a number of areas. In conjunction with Balfour Beatty most of the streetlights across the county have now been renewed. We have secured planning permission to build the new Ely Southern Crossing to tackle the bottle-neck caused by the railway bridge. The new Fire Station in Burwell was built on County Council land. We also signed a "City Deal" with central Government which should unlock £500 million of investment to improve infrastructure in and around Cambridge. We are exploring the possibility for the County Council to develop affordable housing on County Council land. We were successful in lobbying for extra funding for Cambridgeshire schools, although there is still some way to go before we have a fair funding formula for our schools. Following the inadequate Ofsted rating of children's safeguarding services some time again it was very pleasing that, when Ofsted inspected this year, we were rated as "good" – this was the first time an authority had achieved an increase of 2 Ofsted grades following an inadequate ruling.

Locally, working with others we were able to secure a new 25-year lease for Burwell Community Sports Centre at a favourable rent. I have also been approached for help and guidance by a number of local groups and residents on a wide range of topics and individual issues. I also had the honour of being shortlisted in the national Councillor of the Year Awards.

It has been a busy and varied year and I am sure the coming year will be no different.

*There were no questions relating to Cllr David Brown's report.*

**District Councillor's Annual Report:** (*The Clerk read Cllr Allen Alderson's report to the meeting*).  
Changes to the Council

We have made the following changes to the Council:

- The seven committees have been reduced to five.
- Cut senior management team, deleting 14 posts, saving nearly £500,000 annually.
- Frozen the East Cambs. element of the council tax for the last two years and will be again next year. Whilst at the same time providing a balanced budget.
- Put forward plans to the boundary commission to reduce the number of District Councillors from 39 to 27, as from the 2019 local elections.

Wheelie Bins

Since bringing in the wheelie bins we have increased our recycling rate from 33.7% in 2012/13 to 46.1% in 2013/14 making us the 3<sup>rd</sup> most improved English local authority last year. We expect to achieve over 56% this year.

Ely's Markets

Ely's markets are operated by ECDC and are recognised as among the best in our region and are a popular attraction for residents and visitors alike. Last year they generated an income of about £70,000 for ECDC. There is 100% take up of stall sites and there is also a waiting list.

Ely's New Cinema

Work will commence on the Cineworld cinema this September/October. It will open at the end of 2016. Included will be a 500 car car park. An underpass under the A142 for access for pedestrians & cyclists. Also included will be four food outlets and two fast food drive throughs.

Encouraging Apprentices

Last year we set aside £16,000 for local businesses to take on apprentices. So if local business takes on an apprentice who lives and was educated in the district, we will give that business a grant of £1,000. Last year saw 13 apprentices taken on.

East Cambs. Local Plan

The new local plan runs up to 2031. The plan was ratified by full council at the April meeting. It will identify areas for uses as housing, retail, employment and leisure activities. It makes it harder for developers to propose unsuitable applications.

Housing

The forever increasing price of housing means that many people on modest incomes are finding it harder to purchase a property. I feel that as council we should be placing greater emphasis on the provision of affordable rental accommodation. With this in mind we are moving forward with our flagship policy of "Community Land Trusts" in such places as Soham, Swaffham Prior, Stretham and Wilburton. Cllr Charles Roberts is the member of our Conservative group who has been instrumental in driving this policy forward.

Committees

During the last year I have been a member of the Regulatory and Support Services Committee, also the Licensing and the Commercial Services Committee. I was the Council's Infrastructure Champion, working with officers on infrastructure issues. Plus, also I was a member of the Swaffham Internal Drainage Board.

John Chalmers mentioned that it was disappointing that there was no mention of the CIL money and where it may go and that it may end up on the Ely by-pass not the local school. Charlotte Cane said that both ECDC and CCC councillors support the school but that Allen Alderson (ECDC) had said that it (funds for the school) should come from CCC and suggested we get back to both councillors at the next school governors' meeting on Friday. Alastair Everitt discussed ECDC's expectations that CCC pay. John Covill sent his best wishes to Cllr Allen Alderson and was reminded about the failed score R123 list. David

Almond asked if the issue was being taken to MP level. Charlotte Cane said that it may well be after the meeting on Friday.

**Parish Council Report:** *(John Covill reported on behalf of the Parish Council).*

John Covill's report included the various changes such as Eric Day, Geoffry Wollard and the Clerk leaving Swaffham Prior Parish Council. John Covill presented Karen King with a bouquet of flowers. Karen, in thanks, said she had been in the village many years. John Covill mentioned 2 new councillors: Mark Lewinski and David Greenfield.

John Covill mentioned the recent street light, foot path, church improvements. The Gaye Bullied award was, this year, awarded to Janet Willmott.

Elisabeth Everitt asked about the heritage street light in the High Street near the Cazenove's drive. John Covill said that the light had been paid for by the Cazenove's. He also asked who was responsible for the foot path from Cage Hill to the Church. John Covill suggested the surface was CCC's responsibility and overgrown hedges, the hedge owners. Peter Hart suggested issues should go via the The Clerk, so contact The Clerk. Peter Hart added that a contractor does the grass cutting. David Almond said that the grass had been cut but overgrown hedges was an annual problem.

**Parish Council – Financial Report:** *(The Chair read out financial report provided by Steve Kent-Phillips)*

**Additional Village Reports including:**

**Report for School:** *(Charlotte Cane reported to the meeting)*

Charlotte Cane thanked to Roz who had handled difficult times managed many improvements, from bad to now good OFSTED. Charlotte Cane said they were now aiming for the status of outstanding. Concentration was on Phonics, reading and writing and more able pupils. The school was involved in the maypole and molly dancing. The school is popular so there are frequent requests for more places so hopefully there are no plans to close. Problems with the building structure will hopefully get funding help from a meeting on Friday. The last roof leak was near to electrical equipment so if it had been worse the school may have had to close for repairs.

**Swaffham Prior Youth Club:** *(There was no report provided by the Club)*

**Burwell Tigers Football Club:** *(There was no report).*

**Swaffham Prior Community Car Scheme:** *(Janet Willmott reported to the meeting):*

Since its inauguration in 2012 the Swaffham Prior Community Car Scheme has ferried passengers to the Day Centres both at Burwell and Bottisham, Addenbrookes Hospital, The Leys at Histon, an opticians in Sawston, the dentist, and we have now a request for transport to Papworth Hospital.

We have seven drivers, including myself, all of whom live in the village, but are seeking to recruit more drivers to spread the load. This Scheme is intended for residents of the village only and I am proud to say that to date we have been able to provide transport for every request that has been made. Our passengers really appreciate the service that the volunteer drivers are able to provide and with the support of the Parish Council we look forward to being able to continue to help whoever may need to call upon the Scheme. We are in a fortunate position this year that we do not need to ask the Council for additional funding. The mobile phone is used mainly to receive calls as most of the organising of journeys is done by email which is very efficient.

Currently, usage of the Scheme is quite low, with on average one to two trips a week, which I personally find very encouraging, as I feel that it must indicate that there is a good and strong community spirit in Swaffham Prior, that family, friends and neighbours are rallying round to help out with appointments.

**Community Land Trust:** *(David Greenfield reported to the meeting)*

There are 8 applications for affordable rental houses so far in Swaffham Prior and then surrounding area but most so far are local. June 26<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for applications. 8 houses will be leased to 100 Housing for 125 years. The verification process will be July – August with a meeting in September to discuss and allocate. There was some discussion about advertising the properties and the price of the other houses for sale. David Greenfield pointed out that the 8 affordable houses were only leased from CLT to 100 Housing for rental.

**Village Hall Management Committee:** (*Mike Carrington reported to the meeting*)

The hall was decorated during the summer. Funding year on year we got a little better but some fund raising may be needed to do some larger repairs. Grants are available but they are keen to see local support. The Village Feast is the first fund raiser for Village Hall 21-22 June. The committee had dwindled in the year but they now have 4 new members. David Almond asked who the new members were, Mike said they are: Alex Tate, April Cook, Peter Rand and Jenny Bridgeman. Mike also presented the VH accounts.

**Parochial Charities Accounts:** (*The Clerk presented the written accounts*)

Alastair Everitt asked was asked what "Morgan Law (Insc)" on the accounts. John Covill asked if anyone would like to be on the SPPC as Eric Day was no longer on the committee. Mike Carrington proposed Alastair Everitt, seconded by David Greenfield. John Covill thanked Alastair Everitt.

**Scout, Cubs & Beavers Group:** (*Tim Doe reported to the meeting*)

The Swaffham Prior Scout Group had a successful year, 18 Beavers, 22 Cubs, 28 Scouts with 5 others making 73. Some have come back but Cubs are a bit down as they are moving to Scouts. Adult management, Isabell Hill, Catherine Gould and Linda is now secretary plus 3 beaver leaders. There are 4 full-fledged leaders: Amanda Parton, Molly Doe, Chelsea Oliver and Amanda Smith. Tim as Swaffham Prior Scout Leader, Chelsea is now a full leader. Events during the year: Newmarket District Parade and the Remembrance parade was good with the parents. The Cubs and Beavers were a bit limited but did manage to arrange camp and field events. The Scouts at Mepal 24 – in Mepal for 24 hours with no sleeping. They took part in the Cambs. Uni. Scouts & Guides and came 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> overall. They also walked Peddars Way and the National Trust White Fen Camp and on own field that Steve White organised along with a visit to Germany (the Germans came to us last time) with a possible return visit to Billand (Germany) in the summer. The field moves on and should get a kitchen container in June. The general scout association has attempted an on-line system called "Compass", which has not gone too well but manages many aspects including CRB. When data was loaded it crashed, which may take 6 months to resolve. Tim completed his report by saying that there are 10 adults involved which helps get new members. Tim said that the entire team should be thanked.

Business was completed at 20:45

**Open Question Time:**

Alastair Everitt asked about previous question regarding disposal of used needles. John Covill said that his wife had asked, was told the GP's but that they had said not. John Covill said he had asked Allen Alderson if there was a van collecting, why they did not collect for all the village but Allen Alderson had said he did not receive an answer. It seemed it was possible to get yellow disposal (sharps) boxes from physiotherapist. Betty Prime asked if the Council no longer put fences between gardens. John Covill suggested that this would now be Sanctuary Housing. It was stated that a resident in a Sanctuary house had had problems (without a fence) with the dogs next door causing a mess. A council surveyor had been to look at the garden. IT was decided to ask ECDC/CCC regarding policy. John Chalmers pointed out 2 issues: 1) should you / they have fences & 2) What is their policy on who gets houses.

Meeting closed at 21:00.