

A View from the District (February 2011)

The District and County Councils are beginning to reveal the kinds of cuts which will immediately affect our village, but a clear picture has yet to emerge. However, despite assurances repeated to full Council last November that recycling centres like ours on the Recreation Ground are safe, it has been announced that glass, can and tetrapak containers will be removed. They may possibly be replaced with containers for materials such as textiles, shoes, books, CDs/DVDs and toys. However, the paper container will stay, which hints at problems with the quality of the blue bin paper collection. I have asked for full clarification on these issues.

Council met on 27 January: an unusual meeting in that there was no majority group. Also unusual in that we were asked to reverse a decision taken a long time ago that Compulsory Purchase would not be used at the Windmill Estate project in Fulbourn. Now that one resident has wished to exercise his rights following from that decision, the developers have put pressure on the Council to rescind it. It is a messy story and was a messy debate with far more passion than reason. We were told that what has changed in the interim is the community attitude. This is not surprising since the community as a whole has hanged due to the new housing. However the motion was passed comfortably, with an assurance that any particular purchase would need further approval from Council.

We also discussed progress at Northstowe. There is a Joint Committee charged with its delivery, but the District and County Cabinets have decided to set up an 'advisory group' consisting of 3 members from each authority and excluding local members. This led to much debate, and demands for greater transparency. Subsequently we gather that the group has been disbanded.

On 13 January SCDC's Sustainable Parishes Energy Partnership hosted a meeting at Girton Pavilion, which was pleasingly well attended. There are a number of projects being developed, and although sadly none is in Girton our residents may benefit from spin-offs. In particular our neighbours at Histon and Impington are negotiating for bulk installation of roof-panels (both solar-thermal and photo-voltaic).

I mentioned last month the 'Parish Forum for Planning IT' and since they omitted to involve Girton initially I was invited to meet the relevant officers to discuss my concerns. I quickly realised that the officers were unaware of the problems as seen by parishes, and hope that they will now push to correct those I highlighted.

If you would like a fuller monthly report emailed to you please contact me at scdc@de-lacey.org and I shall add you to the list of recipients. If you have any District Council issues you would like to discuss please don't hesitate to ask me.

Douglas de Lacey
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