

Monthly SCDC Report by Edd Stonham – Feb, 2011

Full Council Meeting:

This month has seen councils up and down the country deliberate budget cuts many seeing protesters at meetings. On the 24th February's Full council was not met with any protesters with the normality of many other full council meetings.

As previous reports we knew that savings have to be made and this budget goes down the route of addressing what is a rather bad situation. We still have no comprehensive information on exactly how the New Homes Bonus scheme will affect the council and the leader of the opposition noted that if we proceed with the boundary review how this will affect our new homes bonus. It is noted that the council has no confirmation when the boundary review would happen and that the council was only assuming on 2 years receipts of new homes bonus.

Council Tax will be frozen for the year 2011/12 and SCDC will receive 2.5% pa council tax freeze grant for 4 years. Council tax will be raised by 3.5% in the subsequent 3 years and it is now understood that this is the point at which a government cap will apply

Indications that the imposing debt "HRA subsidy replacement system" which started off at £182m and now risen to £205.6m is to be paid on 1 April 2012 now under a banner of "implementing self-financing council housing". An interim investment strategy is being put into place to allow the financing of this massive debt. Various options are being worked on and these are due to be brought to Cabinet and Council later in the year.

£307,000 was secured by SCDC from Improvement East. The money is to support initial project costs in areas which possible cost savings have been identified by the Council.

The all-Tory Northstowe 3+3 group was disbanded after the last full council after several issues were raised by members.

Histon football club Tree Replacement/Court Actions

As most of you will have read in the Cambridge Evening News the appeal the club made to Crown Court (Held at Ely Magistrates Court) has now been heard with the club losing the appeal for £9500. The Court upheld the fine and ordered that Histon FC pay the Council further legal costs in respect of the appeal hearing of £500. It was considered the club could pay the fine within 24 months.

Ongoing discussions with all parties with regards to replanting trees including the implications of drains/water mains are still proceeding not at much pace I must add.

Grants and Funding

Parents for Playgrounds

Play England has partnered with Robinsons Fruit Shoot to launch 'Parents for Playgrounds' - a national programme that will give five local play areas the chance of winning a renovation bursary of up to £15,000.

Robinsons Fruit Shoot is asking all parents to support the 'Parents for Playgrounds' campaign and nominate playgrounds local to them that are in need of repair via its new parenting website www.readyforten.com from 15th February to the 16th of March 2011.

Up to five play areas will be renovated throughout May, June and July and will be ready for play at the beginning of the 2011 summer holidays.

IVC Visit

During February I was invited to IVC to talk to a class of teenagers about being a Councillor and what is involved in being a councillor. The teenagers asked loads of questions which sparked off loads of ideas. This was really a good insight for myself, I gained a lot of information on what teenagers around our community would like to do and what sort of activities are missing from our villages.

This report and those for previous months are on our website www.chilibdems.co.uk

Your councillors are here to help you. Please feel free to contact us with comments, questions, problems or complaints. We hope that we can help but, if we can't, we probably know someone who can.