

District Councillor's Report for The Mordens Ward SCDC October 2020

Local plan update

The call for sites has now been published. There are 31 sites that have been submitted in The Mordens ward and over 650 sites through the district. The sites, unlike in previous plans, have been published without any analysis or commentary about their likely inclusion in the next local plan. This is a mistake in my view as many residents are understandably concerned and in most cases the anxiety created would have been avoidable as the sites are extremely unlikely to be included given that there has been enough land submitted for about 220,000 houses and it is advised that there will be a requirement of between 5,000 and 30,000. With the consultation not due to start until Summer/Autumn of 2021, residents will have a long wait to be able to comment. Given the upset that this is causing I will be pushing for the administration to bring forward the consultation to allow residents at least an outlet of which to formally raise their concerns.

District Council unlawfully withheld Parish Precepts

It has been confirmed by the South Cambs Administration that back in April, when the parish councils were contacted to be told that the district would need to delay some of the payments to the parishes, the District council had no legal powers to do so. The legislation states that 50% of a parishes precept must be paid to the parish within one month of the start of the financial year. Opposition District Councillors were informed after the parish councils had been contacted. I can confirm that myself and other councillors raised the legality of this but we never felt we had a satisfactory answer. This led to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance making a statement at September's Full Council meeting on the matter. This can be viewed on the council's website. While I appreciate we are all living through difficult times, if we as non-executive members of the council could see that what was happening was unlawful then there is in my view no reasonable excuse for cabinet members to not have been aware. Below is a link to The Local Authorities (Funds) (England) Regulations 1992 Act for more information about the payment requirements and interest on late payment of funds.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1992/2428/contents/made>

Civil Parking Enforcement

At September's full council meeting I seconded a motion for the District council to look into taking over parking enforcement. South Cambs is one of only 13 authorities in England that does not have Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE). With the level of serious crimes that our police force are dealing with, while they do their best it is understandable why they do not make much of an impact on parking problems. I believe that if the District council was able to enforce parking in the district we would have a real chance of tackling the parking problems we have, and improve the lives of those it impacts. I was really please that this had cross party support and I hope together we can really achieve something that

reduces the parking misery that many of our residents face. Government is also consulting on extending CPE powers to include parking that obstructs the pavement, a link to respond to the consultation is below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/managing-pavement-parking/pavement-parking-options-for-change>

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