



SAWSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 08 July 2025 Held at Mill Lane Pavilion - Meeting commenced at 7.15 pm

PRESENT:

Assistant Clerk: Clare Speed

Councillors

Kieran Cooper (Chaired meeting)

David Bard

Colin Groves

Paul Allen

Paul Smith

Anand Pillai

Kevin Deeming

Ian Reeves

+ 2 members of public

83 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Deborah Alderwick - Personal

Kevin Cuffley – Personal

Neil Reid – Personal

Brian Milnes – Work Commitments

Patrick Thouroude – Work Commitments

County Councillor Peter Fane - Personal

84 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME (15 Minutes allowed) *

Councillor Kieran Cooper invited the members of public to speak at the meeting, one resident explained there is a group of adults playing cricket regularly at Orchard Park with a hard cricket ball. This is dangerous and was very close to hitting his wife on a dog walk. He approached the group, and they said they are playing with a tennis ball but the resident explained the loud noise and weight of the ball is definitely not a tennis ball. Councillor Kieran Cooper explained that this has been brought to the meeting before and Councillor Kevin Cuffley offered to go to Orchard Park and was going to approach the group to explain the area is for dog walking and not large groups of adults playing ball games. Councillor Kevin Cuffley is on holiday and the assistant clerk will remind him when he is back and then will bring back to a meeting.

85 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING

David Bard – item 93 as member of PCC

Anand Pillai – item 93 as member of PCC

86 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24 JUNE 2025

The minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held on 24 June 2025 were read, confirmed, and signed.

It was **proposed** by Councillor David Bard and **seconded** by Councillor Colin Groves to accept the minutes.

VOTE: 8 FOR : UNANIMOUS

87 MATTERS ARISING – NEW INFORMATION ONLY

Councillor Kieran Cooper reminder all councillors about the skatepark consultation is taking place tomorrow Wednesday 9 July at Mill Lane Pavilion at 4pm to 7pm, hopefully all can attend.

88 UPDATE FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

No update provided

89 UPDATE FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Update at the end of these minutes.

90 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

25/02211/HFUL	Single storey front extension following demolition of existing porch at 85 Old Forge Way. Proposed by Councillor David Bard and Seconded by Councillor Colin Groves to support to this application.	Support/No Objection Vote: 8 For Unanimous Comment: Support as long as this front extension doesn't shade the neighbour's front window.
25/02274/HFUL	Single storey front extension and garage conversion to form a habitable space at 65 Wakelin Avenue. Proposed by Councillor David Bard and Seconded by Councillor Kevin Deeming to support to this application.	Support/No Objection Vote: 8 For Unanimous
25/02072/FUL	Upward extension and installation of stairs for access to first floor for storage at 9 Falkner Road. Proposed by Councillor David Bard and Seconded by Councillor Paul Allen to no comment to this application.	No Comment Vote: 8 For Unanimous Comment: The Council feels that the present proposal is an improvement on the one previously refused (23/01114/FUL), but notes that the recommendation that five parking spaces be provided has still not been met and still has concerns about potential overshadowing of the garden of No. 1 Huntingdon Road. These issues need to be resolved before permission is granted.
Tree		
25/0578/TTCA	T1 - Yew, reduce crown by 2m, Tree is encroaching the road, to keep crown symmetry reduce crown by 2m at 149 High Street. Proposed by Councillor David Bard and Seconded by Councillor Kieran Cooper to support to this application.	Support/No Objection Vote: 8 For Unanimous

91 ACCOUNTS FOR JUNE 2025

The accounts for June 2025 were presented.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Paul Smith and **seconded** by Councillor Ian Reeves to accept the accounts for June 2025.

VOTE: 9 FOR : 0 UNANIMOUS

92 TO DISCUSS FIDELITY INSURANCE VALUE

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained the clerk contacted the current insurance provider to find out how much it would cost to increase the fidelity insurance from £300k to £1.5 million on the recommendation by the internal auditor. The current insurance company quoted £2,593.92 for the additional premium. This was discussed at length and suggested the clerk contact other parish councils to see what they do and to contact the internal auditor to find out if the Parish Council do not cover all the money will they fail the audit. It was also suggested if Parish Council can cover the precept but not the reserves. Once the clerk has more information to bring it back to another meeting.

93 TO DISCUSS ST MARYS CHURCH WALL

This item was deferred as waiting for the report from the structural engineer.

94 TO DISCUSS TREE AT PADDOCK WAY

The Assistant Clerk explained that the tree surgeon carrying out the work to remove the dead tree at Paddock Way has suggested the tree could be sculptured like the giraffe by Mica Hardware. The tree surgeon has cut the tree to safe height and have left the stump still in as it was agreed to grind out the stump.

The tree surgeon has received a quote from a sculpture who quoted £900 max to sculpture the tree, the parish council could use the £200 which was allocated for the stump to be grounded out and then see if the school would be interested in being involved as the tree is right next to their playing field. The Assistant Clerk will contact the school and bring it back to another meeting.

95 TO DISCUSS LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) unitary options have been released; the options put forward are:

Proposal A: Unitary 1 - Peterborough City Council, Huntingdonshire and Fenland District Councils along with County Council functions. **Unitary 2** - Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils along with County Council functions.

Proposal B: Unitary 1 - Peterborough City Council, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and Huntingdonshire District Councils along with County Council functions. **Unitary 2** - Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District along with County Council functions.

Proposal C: Unitary 1 - Peterborough City Council, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland District Councils along with County Council functions. **Unitary 2** - Cambridge City Council, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils along with County Council functions.

A consultation process has started on the unitary proposal and all councils and individuals have been asked to respond, this was discussed but the council feel they can't make a comment yet as they need more information.

96 TO DISCUSS STREET TRADING CONSENT

The Parish Council have received an application for a mobile street trading consent, for an ice cream van to visit Edinburgh Avenue, Princess Drive, Wakelin Avenue, Ashley Way, Grove Road, Marven Road. Stanley Webb Close, The Green Road, Holme Way, Hayfield Avenue, Chapelfield Way, Mill Lane, Park Road which are within our area and require any comments by 23 July 2025. The application is for Verrecchia's Ice Cream Van to trade Monday to Sunday 12:00 – 19:30.

It was ***proposed*** by Councillor Kieran Cooper and ***seconded*** by Councillor Colin Groves to make no comment.

VOTE: 8 FOR : 0 UNANIMOUS

97 CORRESPONDENCE

None

98 COUNCILLORS ISSUES AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Councillor Colin Groves mentioned the speed camera batteries have been replaced but the information has gone back to 2022 and isn't linking up to his laptop. His going to work to rectify this.

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained that a landscape company are putting posters up around the village and need removing, Councillor Kieran Cooper is happy to remove them if anyone reports them to him.

Meeting Closed 8.00 PM

Sawston Parish Council		
June Payments		
	Description	TO PAY
Talk Mobile	F&GP - Mobile phone contract -staff	£5.95
Talk Mobile	F&GP - Mobile phone contract -staff	£5.95
Clare Speed	F&GP - Travel expense to Dor-2-Dor	£13.95
Amazon	F&GP - Products for stall at Cityfest	£17.99
SCDC	Rec - Emptying bin Catley's Walk A1301 public footpath	£28.00
SCDC	Rec - Recycling bin at Spicers Pavilion	£32.72
YPG	Cemetery - Chapel Electricity	£33.57
YGP	F&GP - Parish Office Gas	£51.68
The Cambridge Sign Company	Fixings for new sign at Orchard Park	£55.14
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Rec - Lynton Way emergency light service	£56.70
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Rec - Lynton Way Fire Alarm service	£62.38
XLN	Rec - Spicers Internet	£67.33
Source for Business	F&GP - Office water 04/12/24 - 05/06/25	£71.78
Source for Business	Rec - Mill Lane water 04/12/24 - 05/06/25	£73.14
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Rec - Lynton Way fire extinguisher service	£74.01
Sutcliffe Play	Rec - Replacement links for nest swing	£76.39
EMG Stapleford	Fuel for the month	£80.94
Engie	Rec - Lynton Way electricity 01/05 - 31/05/25	£86.74
YPG	F&GP - Office Electricity	£91.90
YPG	Rec - Mill Lane Pavilion Gas	£94.76
Lockguard Locksmiths	F&GP - Replace lock on office	£101.64
Honest Employment Law	Staff - HR Compliance	£114.00
Grace Solutions	F&GP Adhoc work	£114.03
Cromwell Fire Ltd	F&GP - Fire alarm/emergency light service	£119.08
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Rec - Mill Lane Fire alarm/emergency light service	£119.08
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Rec - Spicers Fire alarm/emergency light service	£119.08
ADT	Rec - Groundstore Alarm 23/06/25 - 22/07/2025	£119.27
Cambridge Lock & Safe	Rec - Repair to door lock at Lynton Way pavilion	£144.00
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Rec- Mill Lane fire alarm call out	£144.00
YPG	Rec - Mill Lane Pavilion Electricity	£162.68
YPG	Rec - Spicers Pavilion Gas	£163.45
Adcock	Air Conditioning service O/N 52	£195.60
YPG	Rec - Spicers Pavilion Electricity	£215.24
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Rec - Spicers Fire extinguisher service - replace one extinguisher	£218.11
Cromwell Fire Ltd	F&GP - Fire extinguisher service - replace one extinguisher	£225.21
EDF	Rec - Spicers Gas 01/02/25 - 01/06/25	£260.43
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Rec -Mil Lane fire extinguisher service - replace 2 x extinguishers	£279.08
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Rec- Lynton Way Recommended work from service	£280.80
Grace Solutions	F&GP - Monthly fees	£333.23
Lanham & Co	F&GP - Accounts for month	£334.50
Pestagon	Quarterly invoice for Mill Lane & Spicers	£336.00
ADT	Call out and fix error with fire alarm	£358.80
SCDC	Rec - Spicers Pavilion Rates	£399.00
Dor-2-Dor	F&GP - Delivery of Skatepark Consultation leaflet	£420.00
SCDC	Rec - Mill Lane Rates	£454.00
Source for Business	Rec - Spicers water 04/12/24 - 05/06/25	£674.26
Lewis Tree Surgery Ltd	Felling of tree at Paddock Way Agreed 10 June O/N 50	£780.00
SCDC	F&GP - Office Rates	£786.00
Sutcliffe Play	Replacement Springie Horse at Lynton Way Agreed 13 May O/N 41	£1,112.40
Herringbone Restoration Ltd	Cemetery - Repairs to boundary wall at St Marys Church Agreed FP 11 Feb O/N 19	£1,164.00
Nurture	Grass cutting for the month of June	£1,189.00
Avocet Cleaning Services	F&GP - Cleaning Contract for month	£1,481.20
Staff Costs	Staff costs for June	£16,595.38

District Councillors' Report: July/August 2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION: What's proposed

The government is currently progressing with an ambitious programme of local government reorganisation in England, aiming to simplify local government structures and expand devolution. The main focus is on replacing the two-tier system - where county and district or borough councils share responsibilities as they do in Cambridgeshire - with larger unitary councils that deliver all local government services within their areas. This reorganisation is intended to improve public service delivery, enhance local accountability, and generate savings for reinvestment in communities.

In June, SCDC held two briefings about the reorganisation for town and parish councils prior to a consultation survey, open to all, which closes/d on 20 July. SCDC will vote on the option to create a new unitary authority comprising the current South and East Cambridgeshire District Councils along with Cambridge City Council at its July meeting.

After final proposals are submitted to government in the autumn, there will be statutory consultations. If approved by the Secretary of State and Parliament, elections for new 'shadow' unitary councils will be held as soon as possible, leading to the full implementation of new structures—most new unitary authorities are expected to be in place by 2028

LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) are a new, statutory system introduced under the Environment Act 2021 to drive the recovery of nature and deliver wider environmental benefits across England. Each LNRS is designed to be locally led, evidence-based, and highly collaborative, involving input from local authorities, landowners, farmers, environmental groups, and the wider public.

Key Features of Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Spatial Strategies: LNRSs map out the most valuable existing areas for nature and propose specific actions and locations for habitat creation or improvement.

Local Priorities: Each strategy sets out tailored biodiversity priorities for its area, identifying where targeted action will have the greatest impact for nature recovery and other environmental goals such as flood management, carbon capture, and water quality improvement.

Core Components:

- **A local habitat map showing current and potential areas important for biodiversity.**
- **A written statement of biodiversity priorities and proposed actions.**
- **Collaborative Approach: LNRSs require extensive stakeholder engagement and public consultation, ensuring the strategies reflect local knowledge, values, and priorities**

There will be an eight week public consultation on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy commencing 18 July. CPCA will be informing Parish and Town Councils of the consultation and publicising it to the public in July. A link to the draft strategy, including the local habitat maps, is: <https://democracy.cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=1575>

For more information about Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and a link to the survey when this becomes available, go to <https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/conservation-trees-and-hedges/biodiversity-and-ecology/local-nature-recovery-strategy>

EXPIRY OF POSTAL VOTES – are you affected?

As a resident of South Cambridgeshire, you need to be aware of an important change to postal voting. Following a change to the law as part of the Elections Act, postal votes no longer apply indefinitely. Postal votes now expire after a period of three years. The timing of the reapplication legislation means that around 15,000 South Cambridgeshire postal votes are due to expire at the end of January 2026. Voters who wish to keep their postal vote in place will need to make a fresh application. The SCDC Elections Team has already started the process of contacting those residents whose postal vote will be expiring in the new year to ensure they have sufficient time to make a new application before next year's elections. An article about this is also planned for the South Cambs Magazine in Autumn 2025.

Affected electors who do not make a fresh application will have their postal votes removed when they expire at the end of January 2026. If you have any questions, or need help with this, you can email the elections team at elections@scambs.gov.uk.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING REFORM – changes on the way for South Cambs

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is undergoing a significant funding and structural reform as part of the 2025 government spending review and the ongoing Fair Funding Review 2.0.

Key elements of the MHCLG funding review:

Administration Budget Cuts: MHCLG's administration budget will be reduced by 15% over the next five years. Savings will be achieved through efficiency measures, including workplace and digital reform, increased use of AI, insourcing services, and reducing reliance on external consultants. The department aims for £50 million in annual efficiency gains by 2028-29.

Funding Simplification: The number of MHCLG-led grants will be "significantly reduced," consolidating multiple funding streams into fewer, larger grants to cut the administrative burden for both local authorities and the department. Further details expected in the 2026-27 Local Government Finance Settlement.

Consolidated Grants: At least four consolidated grants will be introduced in 2026-27, each bringing together existing grants for similar services into a single, ringfenced fund. For example, all homelessness and rough sleeping revenue funding (except temporary accommodation) will be merged into one grant.

Multi-Year Settlements: The government is moving towards multi-year Local Government Finance Settlements, with the first such settlement in a decade planned for 2026-27. This is intended to improve financial certainty and enable better long-term planning for local authorities.

Fairer, Needs-Based Distribution: The review aims to introduce a new, transparent methodology for funding allocation, better aligned with relative need, cost, and resources.

Consultation and Transition: The government is consulting on the details of the new funding system, including how to support local authorities through the transition and ensure the system remains up-to-date. There is an emphasis on partnership with local government and protecting service users during the transition.

Reduction in Competitive Bidding: The reforms will reduce the use of competitive bidding for grants, which has been costly and time-consuming for councils, and instead focus on rolling grants into the main settlement.

A consultation on the funding review proposals is open until 15 August and can be found [here](#)

MHCLG has also launched a consultation to modernise the administration of council tax. The consultation will explore options to improve support and the council tax collection, and enforcement processes to deliver a fairer and more efficient system for taxpayers and councils. The council tax consultation will close on 12 September. MHCLG is encouraging everyone with an interest to respond to the consultation and provide feedback.

(Press notice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/council-tax-shake-up-to-deliver-fairer-billing-and-support>)

FASTER PLANNING APPEAL PROCEDURES

In June the government announced new regulations to streamline the planning appeals process. These changes aim to make planning processes faster and more efficient, benefitting councils, communities and developers. The new regulations will speed up planning appeal decisions, reducing delays and uncertainty over planning applications. The new process of written applications will only accept evidence put before the local planning authority during the application. This will help reduce additional bureaucracy, speeding up decision-making while keeping decisions locally based. The new regulations are expected to be implemented by the end of 2025. More details will be provided in updated guidance once the final draft of the regulations is received.

FOUR DAY WORKING WEEK – the final decision

New independent analysis of South Cambridgeshire District Council's four-day week shows almost every service that was monitored either improved or was maintained.

A report from the Universities of Salford, Bradford and Cambridge highlights how 21 of 24 services have improved or stayed the same since the trial of four-day week working began at the Council in 2023. Those areas which saw a statistically significant improvement include:

- The percentage of calls answered by the Contact Centre.
- The average number of days taken to update Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims.
- The average number of weeks for householder planning applications to be decided.
- The percentage of planning applications (both large and small) decided within target or agreed timescales.
- The percentage of Council house repairs complete within 24 hours.
- The percentage of complaints responded to on time.

The reports also show that the number of applications for jobs at the Council rose by more than 120 per cent during the four-day week, and the number of workers leaving fell by more than 40 per cent - helping provide benefits to communities through greater stability of services.

During the four-day week, the Council has been able to cut the amount it has to spend over its budgets on staff. There has been a yearly saving of £399,263. This is mainly due to filling many vacancies permanently – rather than using expensive agency workers, which can be disruptive for residents as officers change.

All the detailed data will be considered by SCDC councillors, who will decide whether the Council will become a permanent four-day week employer, and by Cambridge City Council in relation to four day working for shared services (planning and waste), at their respective council meetings in late July.

GRANTS TO IMPROVE ALLOTMENTS – recognising importance of growing food

SCDC has made a grant fund of £100,000 available to improve facilities and access to allotments. Allotment gardens are sometimes overlooked as a valuable community asset. In addition to bolstering food security they are also excellent for social cohesion, fitness and mental wellbeing and, increasingly, are seen as a way of fostering biodiversity. Bids for up to £10,000 can be made available for allotment site improvement projects, such as installing a water supply or improving security. More about the grants and who can apply can be found [here](#). Applications close in late August.

Brian Milnes
Libby Earle
July 2025