

8. INFORMATION FROM DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr P Wilson reported that the Full District Council had debated reducing the number of councillors, which has to be carried out by the Boundary Commissioners and last time it had cost £300,000 to implement.

There was also some discussion on changing the committee system but the outcome will not be known until April.

The new Paradise Pool is very busy and has lots of bookings for parties. The public are much happier with the cleanliness and improvements that have been carried out to the whole area.

The Neighbourhood Panels have now been disbanded and for the time being there will be an annual Parish Conference. Chief Inspector Ormerod and his staff are happy to attend Parish Council meetings if there are major issues of concern and the online "Shape Your Place" facility is also available to report issues.

Other items currently under discussion are:

- performance against 2013/14 Service Priorities
- establishment of a new restaurant operator in The Maltings by the end of 2014
- opening of a new cinema in Downham Road, which is on schedule subject to planning approval
- provision of a detailed costed plan for the development and construction of a new District Leisure facility.

The implementation of changes to the recycling services was on time and within budget and has shown an increase in recycling in the District from 35% to 54%.

Cllr Wilson also reported that the County Council would be setting up a £500,000 pot of funding to support community transport schemes and she would email Gillian Leeper to make her aware of this.

Cllr G Wilson reported that following the decision to implement redundancies to make some savings he had proposed a change to the budget papers to avoid the redundancies. Staff had also lobbied the meeting but unfortunately the proposition had been lost by 2 votes. One prominent member had resigned in protest at the proposed cuts, which will result in a bye-election in Sutton.

Cllr Wilson also reported on the proposal to cut the number of councillors and change the committee set up.

County Cllr Bill Hunt supports ESDAR and is working to help their cause and he was pleased to report that the District Council had agreed the £2000 reduction in their business tax.

Haddenham had not been successful in its bid for the Local Minor Highways Bid for 2014/15 but Cllr Hunt was pleased to see that traffic calming work in Duck Lane would be carried out before the end of March.

The revised 106 hourly bus service proposals have gone out to tender and it is hoped they will be implemented in July.

A new committee structure at the County Council will mean increased costs, slower decisions and more officer control.

The County Council Tax will increase by 1.95% in 2014/15. County Farms and Shire Hall will not be sold off to raise money.

Cllr Hunt supports the Ely By Pass application and also reported that the Connecting Cambridgeshire Project and the Science Park Station are still on track.

He is opposed to the proposed wind farm in Aldreth and the application for 100 houses off Wilburton Road.

He would also urge everyone to submit comments to the consultation on the Ely Station Gateway plan.