

## **BRIGHTWELL, FOXHALL & PURDIS FARM GROUP PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes**

Of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at Trinity Park at 7.30 pm on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015

#### **Present**

Cllr E Warham – Chairman  
Cllr B Newell  
Cllr A Wells  
Cllr A Day  
Cllr A Finch  
Cllr E Lawrence  
Cllr J Batham  
Cllr N Yeo – Suffolk Coastal District Council  
Cllr P O'brien – Suffolk County Council  
Mrs Angie Buggs - Clerk

#### **64.15 Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman**

The retiring Chairman asked for nominations for the office of Chairman of the Group Parish Council. Cllr Wells proposed Cllr Warham as Chairman, seconded Cllr Day – all in favour. As there were no other nominations, Cllr Warham was duly elected. Cllr Warham signed her Acceptance of Office form, countersigned by Mrs A J Buggs Clerk.

Cllr Day proposed that Cllr Lawrence be elected as Vice-Chairman, seconded Cllr Warham – all in favour.

#### **65.15 Declaration of acceptance of office**

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office Forms were signed by councillors and counter signed.

#### **66.15 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr G Watts (due to business commitments) and Pc Paul Smith.

#### **67.15 Declaration of interest**

None

#### **68.15 Minutes**

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015 were approved as being a true record.

#### **69.15 Matters arising from the minutes**

#### **62.15 Members questions to the Chairman**

- a. Cllr Day reported that the equipment in the telephone kiosk had still not been installed and he would be contacting BT again. **Action: Cllr Day / Clerk**

## **70.15 To elect a Chairman and Members of the Planning Committee**

Cllr Newell proposed, seconded Cllr Lawrence that the Planning Committee should consist of Cllrs Warham, Day, Wells, Newell, Lawrence, Watts and Finch – all in favour.

Cllr Warham proposed, seconded Cllr Wells that Cllr Watts should be appointed as Chairman of the Planning Committee – all in favour. Although Cllr Watts was not present at the meeting he had agreed to continue in the post of Planning Committee Chairman.

## **71.15 To appoint a Police Liaison member**

Following discussion Cllr Lawrence, seconded Cllr Newell that Cllr Day, Warham and Finch share the responsibility of attending the Police Liaison Meetings – all in favour.

### **The meeting was adjourned to receive reports from:**

- Cllr O'Brien – Suffolk County Council / SCDC Council – written report

#### District Council – Annual Report

I have been a district councillor for 16 years and, as I am standing down at the May election, I thought it would be interesting to look back, to reflect, briefly, on my time as a district councillor.

I was elected for Kirton Ward in May 1999, ( later to become a 2 member ward in 2003 including Nacton & Purdis Farm) part of a completely new administration that was to prepare for the new Cabinet system. I was appointed as Cabinet member for Health & Well-Being and my prime responsibility was Port Health, visiting schools and advocating a healthy life style plus attending Cabinet meetings, Full Council and giving reports. I did this for 5 years.

Councillors had no computers, ipads, blackberrys; I didn't have a mobile phone! But strange to say, we managed!

In 2001 I was elected to SCC for The Trimleys & Kirton Division for 4 years and, with the boundary changes in 2003, I moved across to Martlesham Division, where I have remained. In 2005 I was appointed Cabinet member for Children, Schools and Young People's Services, a post I filled until 2009. As a result, I stood down from my SCDC Cabinet position and concentrated on my parishes and one or two committees at SCDC.

I have to say that I have been fortunate to have had an excellent working relationship with all my parish councils and, indeed, with parishioners. I thank you all for your support.

However, the application to build, first 1000 houses at Adastral Park, which was rapidly increased to 2000, shocked and motivated me, and many others, to object in the strongest, most forceful terms. I have written numerous letters, made representations and spoken at Council meetings over the years. The opposition and fight has lasted 7 years and is still being fought by NANT. I remain a committed objector. My stance did not endear me to the administration at SCDC. Nonetheless, I have continued to represent the views of my constituents, particularly in relation to planning.

For the last couple of years I have been a member of the Audit & Governance Committee and, despite the dryness of many of the issues, I have appreciated the strength of the committee in its determination to investigate and highlight the governance of the council.

The district council that will be elected in May will be very different from the one it replaces. The numbers of councillors is being reduced from 54 to 42.

SCDC is moving premises. The Melton Hill site is to be sold for housing and new offices are to be built on the Girdleston site at Melton.

SCDC has not increased council tax for the 5<sup>th</sup> year.

I have spent all my Community Enabling Fund on projects such as: renovation projects for church and village hall; flood protection, play areas, kitchen equipment for village hall.

#### Suffolk County Council – Annual Report

For the 5<sup>th</sup> year Suffolk County Council's council tax share is to be frozen. Suffolk residents will not pay more than they did in 2010/11. The council has managed, successfully, to deliver savings in excess of £130m over the last four years. However, as the government's deficit reduction programme is set to continue until 2018/19, there is a forecast of a further £120m budget shortfall that will need to be addressed over the next three years. The Council tax freeze was agreed as part of the budget proposals for 2015/16, which include savings of £38.2million, to be made across services during the financial year. The bulk of these savings (£24.6m) will be delivered through wide-ranging transformation programmes which will result in the council becoming a leaner and more focused organisation. The remaining savings will be made by: reducing previous contingency budgets, set aside for major projects; change management; budgetary savings from within service areas. Meanwhile, over the last five years, there has been a reduction of approx. 47% in the workforce.

I am stating the obvious when I say that our children are our future. It is therefore, with a measure of some satisfaction, that I note there is an improvement in education attainment in Suffolk. Suffolk has risen 12 places in the national league table for GCSE results since 2013; from 137<sup>th</sup> to 125<sup>th</sup> out of 151 local authorities. Whilst this does not generate flag waving it shows an upward trend. In 2012, Suffolk had fallen 8.9% behind the national average at GCSE. This prompted the Raising the Bar programme. Although improvement has been slow the gap between Suffolk and the national average has narrowed. The 2014 results now show the margin to be 1.7%.

There have been improvements for Early Years and Key Stage 1 in literacy, writing, maths and reading. All risen in the national ranking.

As a former Cabinet Member for Children's Services I take particular interest in Suffolk education and wish for greater, speedier progress.

An Initiative to drive employment opportunities was launched by SCC and New Anglia LEP in February. Employers across Suffolk are being urged to create new apprenticeships. £1.5million has been put into the campaign to double the number of apprentices to 5,000 by 2019. Increasing the number of apprenticeships will play a vital part in tackling the skills shortage in Suffolk.

As I mentioned in my annual report last year, the aim, indeed the necessity of organisations, such as county, district, health, police, fire and ambulance, to work in partnership is essential for services to be delivered. I will identify much of the good work that is taking place and the continued efforts to strive for closer/integrated working.

One of the most successful partnerships is between the 'blue light services'. Four fire stations across Suffolk in Ixworth, Elmswell, Debenham and Framlingham are shared with the police service; ambulance crews in Lowestoft and Brandon are now based at fire stations.

The government has awarded a grant of £4.94million to help increase the number of shared bases for fire, police and ambulance. Not only does this cement partnership working, but it will deliver financial savings for all the parties.

Suffolk's energy-from-waste site at Great Blakenham is now open and a recent agreement between Suffolk and Norfolk will see 40,000 tonnes of Norfolk's residual household waste used to generate electricity. Both councils will benefit with savings of £1 million over the period of the deal. During construction, over 100 Suffolk firms won contracts to supply goods and services to the site. It has created 47 new jobs on site and a further 200 could be produced if the proposed greenhouse project goes ahead.

Suffolk's Hate Crime Service and partnership organisations have launched Stay Safe badges to support vulnerable adults. The Stay Safe Scheme was developed to enable vulnerable people to feel safer by providing them with places they can go, should they need help or support. Businesses involved include libraries, leisure centres, shops, restaurants, banks and pubs. Suffolk Police have supported Stay Safe by producing Stay Safe cards, stickers and in funding the Stay Safe badge.

Engaging with partners is often slow but I hope that I have shown, with the above, that collaboration is gaining momentum. SCC departments are finding new initiatives and more efficient ways of working across organisations.

The Suffolk Police and Crime Panel, that I chair, meet quarterly with Tim Passmore, The Police & Crime Commissioner. We scrutinise and debate issues such as: finance, responding to emergencies; solving crime; preventing and reducing crime and caring for the victims of crime. There are particular areas that have recently gained public recognition and momentum. Domestic violence and child exploitation have come under considerable scrutiny and the PCC has made those his top priorities.

I have frank and open informal discussion with the Commissioner on a regular basis and he is extremely keen to further partnership working as he regards it as vital to the future delivery of service. I chaired the First National Conference of Police & Crime Panels in Nottingham, earlier in the year.

I have been continually interested in developments to deal with problems on the Orwell Bridge. I recently wrote a letter to MP Therese Coffey stating I believed that the speed limit on the Orwell Bridge should be 50mph and, indeed, that lorries should be confined to the inside lane of the A14 (and other major roads) and restricted to 50mph.

Finally, I have spent my locality money on projects such as: parish newsletters; road cones; replacement of fencing; picnic benches; village hall repairs.

- Cllr Yeo – Suffolk Coastal District Council – verbal report
- Suffolk Police – PCSO Glynn Bown – written report

Monthly Report

**Period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 – 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

Parish	No. of crimes recorded	Same month last year
Brightwell	0	0
Bucklesham	2	1
Foxhall	3	0
Levington	0	0
Nacton	5	2
Newbourne	2	4
Purdis Farm	11	21
Waldringfield	0	0
Total Crime this month	23	28

This month's recorded crime was 23. The level of recorded crime for the same period in 2014 was 28.

Brightwell is crime free this month.

Bucklesham 2 reported crimes this month, a house that is currently being renovated was entered but nothing taken and a local public house was entered and cash was taken, a Police Direct message was sent out asking for information, and enquiries are still on-going.

Foxhall had 3 crimes this month, 2 garden statues were taken from the garden of a residential property sometime between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April, and overnight on the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2 barns were entered at Sawmill, Brookhill Woods and items removed.

Levington are crime free this month.

Nacton had 5 reported crimes this month. 2 of the crimes relate to an Assault that took place inside Olives bar at Orwell Truck Stop, a container located at the side of the road at seven hills, was entered and various signs have been removed sometime between 1<sup>st</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> April. A car was damaged whilst parked overnight on Felixstowe Road and the club house of Priory Park Caravan Park was entered overnight on the 24<sup>th</sup> April and various items were taken.

Newbourne had 2 reported crimes this month also, some hedging on a piece of land in Mill Road, was damaged and 1 person was charged with Theft from a shop.

Purdis Farm recorded 11 crimes this month, 8 relate to Sainsbury's or Homebase. 1 person was charged with Driving whilst unfit through Drink/Drugs, a van was taken from a driveway of a residential property overnight on the 13<sup>th</sup> April and a car was damaged whilst parked in an open air car park in Ash Close.

Waldringfield is crime free this month.

A view of crime maps and data can now be found on the Internet [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)

**The meeting was re-convened.**

**72.15 Clerk's Report**

The purpose of this report is to update members on outstanding issues, items received after the deadline for agenda items, correspondence and action taken by the Clerk.

#### Councillor Travel Expenses Update

The Government has decided not to proceed with changes to legislation which would have provided a tax exemption for councillor travel expenses in the Finance Bill 2015. However, it has reserved the right to raise this matter through later legislation.

#### Prayers

A new law has been created to ensure local councils and other tiers of local government have the right to hold prayers. The Local Government (Religious etc Observances) Act 2014 received Royal Assent on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

The new law seeks to ensure that all local councils can incorporate prayers into council meetings. Government previously stated that it had already legislated through the General Power of Competence in the Localism Act 2011 in order to counter a High Court judicial review decision that councils were unable to hold prayers within their meetings. However, it had also stated that the Localism Act's General Power of Competence had not been the cure-all in empowering councils as 'smaller parish councils do not have this power'. Parish meetings are unable to take advantage of the General Power of Competence and local councils are unable to do so unless they meet the eligibility conditions relating to qualified clerk. This new Act is the vehicle for ensuring all councils and parish meetings can include prayers within their meetings should they wish to do so. The Act also empowers them to support and facilitate religious events.

Local councils will now wish to consider whether they will include prayers within their meetings. Those councils that previously held prayers within their meetings might have already ceased this practice or moved prayers to a session before the meeting. This remains acceptable practice. Councils will note that the scope of the Act is not confined to the traditional act of Christian prayers within council meetings but appears to also permit other religious observances within meetings.

The law comes into force on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

#### Unauthorised Encampments

Local councils faced with illegal or unauthorised encampments will wish to be aware of Government guidance *Dealing with illegal and unauthorised encampments A summary of available powers* which seeks to underline that prompt action can be taken using a broad range of powers. This document can help local councils to understand what action they might take and what action they can expect and encourage enforcing authorities to take when faced with unauthorised encampments. It also highlights that enforcing authorities should not 'gold plate human rights and equalities legislation' and should take into account the various adverse impacts on the community caused by failure of the relevant authorities to act. Some local protocols have been set up by local public service providers, including the police and principal local authorities. Local councils might also wish to consider these alongside this list of powers when faced with illegal or unauthorised encampments.

#### Reconstruction of Monument Farm Calvert C353

The structure has been found to be in a poor condition and is to be reconstructed. To facilitate the works, a road closure at the structure will be required, meaning vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists will not be able to pass through the site.

A signed diversion route will be in place for the duration of the works. The road closure at the bridge will be in place as of 13th July 2015 and will last for 6 weeks, finishing on Friday, 28th August 2015.

#### Local Government Ombudsman

Local councils will wish to be aware of a new Government consultation *Strengthening Parish and Town Council Accountability: Consultation on Extending the Remit of the Local Government Ombudsman to Larger Parish and Town Councils*. Currently local councils do not have a regulatory body or Ombudsman. This leaves complaints about parish councils largely within the self-regulatory framework of internal complaints procedures, unless there is a matter subject to specific regulation, such as a criminal or financial wrongdoing which might then be subject to intervention by an external body.

All councils will wish to consider this consultation which on the face of it relates only to larger councils and considers how to define larger councils for this purpose. Government could decide to set a regulatory framework which leaves it the flexibility to decide which councils to apply the control at their discretion. The example of automatic precept referendums will be familiar to local councils where Government is publicly critical of larger council expenditure but has reserved itself the power to impose referendums on any size of council.

#### Waldringfield Quarry – Decision Notice

The owners of Waldringfield Quarry have been granted the following application.

Variation of Condition 1 & 2 of Planning Permission C/11/0722 – Continued use of part of sand and gravel quarry for importation, storage and processing of concrete rubble and soils to provide secondary aggregates.

#### Lodge Farm Cottage Purdis Road Flooding Problem

I have been informed by Suffolk County Council Highways that the gullies and soakaways have been cleaned and an order was placed with a contractor on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March to clear the ditch. Unfortunately the contractor requires a road closure in order to carry out this work which will take approximately three months to process therefore the likely completion date is by the end of July 2015.

#### **73.15 New Councillor Course**

The Clerk reported that Cllr Finch had made a request to attend the New Councillor Course in September provided by SALC at a cost of £100. Cllr Warham proposed, seconded Cllr Wells that this expenditure be approved – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

#### **74.15 To discuss the networking with neighbouring Parish Councils re Broadband speeds**

The Clerk reported that Bucklesham Parish Council would like to become involved with the initiative to campaign for higher Broadband speeds and Nacton will be considering networking at their next

Parish Council Meeting. Cllr Day stated that Kesgrave Town Council has stated that Kesgrave have a dedicated exchange and do not have a problem with Broadband speed. It was agreed that the Clerk contact Kesgrave Town Council again to clarify their understanding of the issues and report back to the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

#### **75.15 Planning**

No planning applications have been received since the last meeting.

#### **76.15 Finance**

##### Income

Precept 1 <sup>st</sup> Instalment	£3,551.00
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##### Expenditure

A J Buggs Salary and Expenses April 2015	£214.73
SALC Subscription	£664.00

Cllr Warham proposed, seconded Cllr Newell that the above expenditure is approved – all in favour.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **77.15 To receive the accounts for the year 2014/2015**

The Clerk had previously distributed a copy of the year-end accounts to each councillor and presented the accounts for 2014/2015 to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Day, seconded Cllr Wells that the year-end accounts 2014/2015 and the Local Councils in England Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman – agreed by the council.

Cllr Finch and Lawrence requested a copy of the budget for the financial year 2015/2016. **Action: Clerk**

#### **78.15 Correspondence**

None

#### **79.15 Meetings attended by councillors / clerk**

- a. Cllr Warham reported that she had recently attended the Safer Neighbourhood meeting and speeding had been raised as an issue. Cllr Warham suggested that maybe speed monitoring equipment could be purchased out of the Locality Budget 2015/2016. It was agreed that the Clerk should investigate cost of the equipment with PC Paul Smith. **Action: Clerk**
- b. Cllr Finch reported that he had attended the Foxhall Neighbourhood Watch Meeting and speeding had been discussed as being an issue. The Secretary has been asked to investigate Community Speed Watch for Bucklesham Road. Cllr Warham stated Cllr Batham had been appointed as contact for the Parish Council. Cllr Finch also stated that the Foxhall Neighbourhood Watch Meeting had discussed the possibility of installing priority signs in Straight Road Foxhall. Cllr Finch was advised to contact Suffolk County Council Highways. **Action: Cllr Finch**

#### **80.15 Members questions to the Chairman**

- a. Cllr Finch reported that Valley Works appears to be in breach of their operating restrictions and local residents were experiencing problems with noise as they come through Foxhall and turn into Straight Road. It was agreed that Cllr Finch would investigate the current operating restrictions. **Action: Cllr Finch**

**81.15 Date of next meeting**

Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15 pm**

Signed ..... Date.....

Angie Buggs  
Clerk to Brightwell, Foxhall & Purdis Farm Group Parish Council