

Hartest Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Institute on Wednesday 3 October 2013 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Chris Browning (Chair), Howard Hirst, Jo Pask, David Turner, Scilla Turner and Anna Warren-Thomas

In Attendance: Co Cllr R Kemp, Dist Cllr J Long, Mr B Pullen and Mrs P M Lamb (Parish Clerk)

ACTION

- 13/068 Apologies for absence: Cllr David Burr and PCSO H Partington
- 13/068 Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the meeting held on the 3 September were approved and signed.
- 13/069 Matters Arising: None
- 13/070 Declarations of interest: Cllrs D & S Turner re their neighbour's planning application B/13/01035/FHA and B/13/01036/LBC: Pompes, Shimpling Road: Erection of Side Extension
- 13/071 Dispensation Requests re Declarations of Interest: None
- 13/072 Public Forum: Nothing to report.
- 13/073 Police Report: During the period from 2-30 September no crimes had been recorded within the parish (compared to 1 crime for the same period last year).
Police are continuing to encourage residents to make contact about any suspicious activity in the village; a description of a person, vehicle registration and location, or direction of travel can make all the difference to Police responding to your calls.
Trick or treaters across Suffolk are being urged by Police to take a responsible attitude to Halloween and ensure that it is a happy and safe time for everyone, young or old.
In the run up to Halloween, officers from the Babergh West Safer Neighbourhood Team are visiting local schools with the aim of educating pupils on how to behave responsibly within the community. Halloween celebrations often involve young people taking part in trick or treat activities. Unfortunately, in previous years, this has involved a minority of youngsters across the county throwing eggs and flour at houses, or people, after the occupants decline to give them a treat. Any damage caused by this behaviour will be treated as criminal damage, and those caught will be dealt with.
- 13/074 County Councillor's Report: SCC's Passenger Transport Team: A number of service changes have recently been received. The public transport website, www.suffolkonboard.com, is up to date. The main areas affected are Southwold, Halesworth, Lowestoft, Bungay and Beccles.
Stanstead Footpath No 9: The Planning Inspectorate now has the information it requires to proceed, and is seeking agreement to adopt the Written Representations procedure.
Broadband in Suffolk: Broadband speeds are inconsistent and generally poor across much of Suffolk. Upgrades to fibre broadband (Fibre to the cabinet, FTTC) are generally limited to the denser urban areas, with rural areas left with older copper broadband. BT has upgraded 59% of the cabinets across Suffolk, where a commercial need was identified. BT

has undertaken this process, and committed to upgrading 59% of areas in Suffolk using its own capital at its own risk. The other areas (those with high civil engineering and power costs, and fewer lines connected to secure revenue) are non viable and were set to be left unimproved. At this point, SCC chose to intervene in these "leftover" areas as there was market failure. In order to fix this, and extend the 59% coverage to 90%, SCC signed a contract with BT committing investment to turn the non viable ones viable. So our investment, termed the "Suffolk Better Broadband Programme" intervenes in the 41% of Suffolk which has been left over by the (BT and Virgin Media) commercial upgrades, i.e. is termed the "intervention area". This contract commits £11.68m of SCC funds, £11.68m of DCMS funds and a further contribution from BT. Every premise in the county has speeds of between 2Mbps and 24Mbps. This will be completed in September 2015 (with nine rollout phases). Check the phasing of your area at www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com

In terms of the NAO report, the BBC reports included at least two factual inaccuracies:

1. The BBC took the main message of the NAO report of a delay in meeting the DCMS target of achieving 90% coverage, translated this into a 'slowness' in deploying rural broadband, and suggested that roll-out in four areas (Highlands & Islands, Cumbria, Norfolk, Suffolk) was particularly 'slow'. This accusation of 'slowness' is inaccurate, since all four highlighted areas (including Suffolk) were among the first to sign contracts and among the first to start to deploy broadband in rural areas and our contract will be completed within the 2015 deadline.

2. The NAO report makes clear that the four areas will not reach 90% Superfast Broadband coverage because the funding allocated by BDUK was insufficient to meet that target (i.e. the DCMS funding model under-estimated the cost of meeting that target. The BBC report accuses the four Local Bodies of not applying for sufficient funds, which is inaccurate. (Suffolk had no say in the amount of funding awarded by BDUK.) In Suffolk, we signed a contract to deliver around 85% of superfast coverage, the DCMS policy was 90%. Although other local authorities have signed contracts to deliver this 90%, and are hence "on target", we "traded" 5% superfast speed to ensure that everybody got something, so we are aren't meeting the 90% target, but, our approach is actually more valuable to the people of Suffolk (as per feedback from surveys and consultation etc). www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com

Save Local Pubs: Across the country, 26 pubs close every week. In many instances, valued community pubs are converted into other uses such as betting shops and pay-day loan stores, or are demolished, without planning permission being required. This means that local communities, and the councils representing them, have no say before the pubs are lost for ever. We are therefore asking if you could please put forward a motion for your next Council meeting resolving to submit the following proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act: "That the Government helps protect community pubs in England by ensuring that planning permission and community consultation are required before community pubs are allowed to be converted to betting shops, etc or are allowed to be demolished."

Below is a suggested motion you could use for convenience.

Pubs inject an average of £80k into their local economy each year and support almost one million UK jobs, 46% of which are 16–24 year olds. They are a vital part of local economies. The demolition of pubs is classed as "permitted development" meaning planning permission is not required. Between 2003 and 2012, 414 former pubs were demolished in London alone. The Sustainable Communities Act is an ideal tool to use to deal with this problem. If many councils jointly submit this proposal to government under the Act, it will put significant pressure for planning system changes to be made.

Sample Motion[Name] Council notes the possibility of submitting the

following proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act: 'That the Secretary of State helps protect community pubs in England by ensuring that planning permission and community consultation are required before community pubs are allowed to be converted to betting shops, supermarkets, etc, or are allowed to be demolished.'

The Council notes that if this power were acquired, it would allow the council to determine if pubs should be demolished or converted into other uses and could save many valued community pubs. The Council resolves to submit the proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act and to work together with Local Works and the Campaign for Real Ale to gain support for the proposal from other councils in the region and across the country.

Suffolk Flood & Coastal News: Defra's flood and coastal resilience partnership funding was introduced in 2011. This funding system allocates a proportion of national funding to flood and coastal erosion schemes based on outcomes - generally number of properties protected. Any shortfall in funding must be filled by local contributions. Having been in place for two years, Defra is commissioning a mini-review of how it is working and whether it is delivering the desired outcome of more schemes progressing and local communities having greater say in the design of schemes. The Suffolk Flood Risk Management Partnership and Suffolk Coast Forum has been actively engaged in the review.

The flood team has been undertaking a series of briefings to Parish Councils across the county explaining what communities and homeowners can do to assist in managing flood risk (whether from the sea, rivers or surface water). The important messages are outlined on the website <http://www.greensuffolk.org/flooding>.

One of the key issues is that riparian owners (land and home owners, who have watercourses on or adjacent to their properties) are often unclear about their rights and responsibilities. We will be undertaking a series of media communications in the coming weeks to address this issue, promoting the Environment Agency's very useful *Living on the Edge Guide* (available on the website above) and joining them to promote new guidance for landowners.

We would also like to remind everyone to report incidents of flooding, particularly where properties are flooded internally. This is crucial information for building up a picture of where to focus our efforts to reduce flood risk. An online form is available on www.suffolk.gov.uk/floodrisk

New Highways Contract: This which starts on 1 October.

The area highway offices, your main point of contact on highways issues, will remain part of SCC. Among other things, the area offices will continue to carry out the regular inspection of our roads, and make the key operational decisions on salting and snow clearing. The new contract will provide councillors with ready access to up to date information on what work is planned in their divisions. This will start to become available during the first few months of the contract.

- 13/075 District Councillor's Report: Cllr Long congratulated those responsible for the excellent Harvest Supper last Friday and wished to pass on his thanks to all those participating in its organisation etc. Cllr Long advised that HM Government has, under the Scrap Metal Act 2013, devolved the licensing of scrap metal dealers and everyone involved in handling such materials, etc, etc to Borough/District Councils. In this regard, BDC is currently calculating the fees to be charged. Cllr Long was pleased to advise that two BDC officers, Christine Thurlow and Lynda Bacon, would be attending the Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 5 November to discuss the subject of social housing at Banham's Yard and how the current situation has come about. It was agreed that a separate, additional agenda, relating to this specific item, would be prepared and forwarded in advance to these officers.

Cllr Warren-Thomas reported that she had recently visited BDC's offices, as a resident of that development, viewed the available microfiche records and spoke to Laura Cutler. The impression given was that the Parish Council had not been vocal enough, nor representation forceful enough, in respect of this matter and therefore appears to have been overlooked. The original planning application, for six dwellings, was submitted in 2002. Cllr Long was asked as to the situation re the commuted funds regarding the development. It was agreed that the PC's records would be reviewed in this connection. Co Cllr Kemp advised that there would appear to be some breakdown in the transfer of conditions from the Planning to the Legal Department.

JL

Clerk/JP

13/076 Finance & Administration:

- (a) Receipts: £ 4,590.00 – Second instalment of precept
- (b) Payments: The following items were approved for payment:
 Information Commissioner's Office: Data Protection Renewal- 11.9.13: £35.00
 Suffolk Acre: PC Insurance Renewal: 1.10.13-30.9.14: £565.14
 Clerk's Salary: Jul-Sept inclusive (including £1.40 re car parking) £437.99
 Post Office Ltd (for HMRC - PAYE): £97.80
- (c) Closure of Co-operative Bank Accounts: A termination cheque is awaited and will be credited to the new Barclays account.
- (d) Possible PC Article in 'Contact': Following discussion on this matter, it was agreed that a quarterly bulletin of the PC's closed achievements would be provided along with the date of the next PC meeting and a welcome to all residents to attend. This is to be discussed further at the November meeting.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

13/077 Planning:

- (a) Decision received: Permission refused: B/13/00790/LBC: Dowsetts, Melford Road: Installation of 2 no solar thermal panels to south-west slope of existing building
- (b) Withdrawn applications: None
- (c) New planning applications: None
- (d) New planning applications received since the date of this notice: B/13/01035/FHA and B/13/01036/LBC: Pompes, Shimpling Road: Erection of Side Extension
 Following consideration of these plans, Members agreed to support the application.
- (e) Tree Preservation Order/Tree Conservation Area Application: None
- (f) Appeals: None
- (g) Other Planning Matters
 Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr S Turner had received a copy of the report following receipt of the survey responses. A further meeting of the Group is to be held on 6 October. Cllr Hirst agreed to attend that meeting on behalf of the PC.
 Social Housing – Banhams Yard: Refer Min 13/075 above.

Clerk

HH

13/078 Green, Cemetery and Churchyard

- (a) Cemetery
 Environmental Management: Nothing to report.
 Cemetery Planting Scheme: Cllr Pask had circulated the quotation in the sum of £783.30 received from Sandy Lane Nurseries. It was noted that Mr Michael Feather had recommended taller tree guards (1.2m) than those cited (0.9) to provide improved protection from deer. Cllr Pask advised that Mr Cornish is to spray the area prior to planting (for the cost of the weedkiller only). Mr Cornish had also offered, at a cost of £20/hour, to move the mulch, with a colleague, from one end of the cemetery to the other. This was approved.
 Cllr C Turner advised that the hedge at the lower part of the cemetery requires a major cutting back. Cllr Turner is also to

check with Mr Cornish as to whether a second grass cut is to be undertaken.

Cllr Hirst advised that recent visitors to the cemetery had commented favourably on its current excellent state.

Cemetery Management: It was agreed that certificates will, in future, be issued in respect of reserved plots. The number of plots currently remaining in the main cemetery are to be confirmed. Cllr Pask is to ask Ralph Carpenter if he would kindly copy the existing plan(s) and perhaps include this on the web site. It was noted that a plan for the new extension will be required (using an appropriate software package(?)). The suggestion of allowing families to purchase one of the new trees to be planted shortly was discussed. It was agreed that Cllr S Turner would prepare an article for 'Contact' in this regard

ST

(b) The Green

Trees: Nothing to report.

Ditch near The Crown PH: Cllr D Turner reported that he is finding it very difficult to progress matters with SCC in this regard. A price of £10/m had already been received from a land drainage company which would give a job total of £1,700. It is hoped that there will be some reduction in the flooding impact following the work already done by SCC, but it is still likely that Parson's Walk will flood as, without the proper land drain, the water will not reach the river. Cllr Turner is to obtain up-to-date quotes, and discuss the matter with SCC and The Crown PH manager, in the hope that the cost of this work could be split three ways.

(c) Hedge from Parish Notice Board to School: As requested, Cllr Pask had obtained a quotation from JMS Gardening for this work. Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Pask would liaise with the landowner and SCC re their responsibilities in this regard. In the meantime, JMS would be advised that we are considering the matter.

(d) Request to Use the Green – Saturday 2 November

Members were happy to authorise Hartest School to use the Green for parking on the above date for their annual fireworks event.

DT

(e) Parking on the Green: It was agreed that a reminder would be placed on the website, and in 'Contact', that permission to use the Green must be sought from the Parish Council in advance of any desired use.

Clerk

13/079 Highways and Footpaths

(a) Traffic Management

Speeding: Warning signs re Hartest Bridge etc had been requested of Mr P Gant of SCC; a response is to be expedited along with a request for a general meeting to be held re traffic/safety matters, which would also include the clearing of the footpath from Somerton Road to the School.

Clerk

13/080 Correspondence: Nothing to report.

13/081 Matters of report only: Cllr S Turner asked that a grit heap be made available at Green View (near hedge opposite the entrance). SCC will be asked to add this to the village's gritting list.

Clerk

13/082 Matters for consideration at the next meeting: Budget requirements for 2014/15.

All

13/083 The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Date of next Meeting:

Tuesday 5 November at 7 p.m. in the **School Hall**.

Approved at the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 5 November 2013