

MINUTES OF COOKLEY & WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE PAVILION 17 MARCH 2014

Present: Cllrs. David Cask (Chairman) (DC), Mike Porter (MP), David Whitwood (DW), Anne Thomas (AT), John Winter (JW), In attendance: Raymond Catchpole (Clerk), prospective parish councillor candidate for Cookley, Ian Newton and one member of the public.

Apologies: Cllrs. Zoé Mair, Bill Camplin, Nick Jarvis, PCSO 3195 Julie Hinton, County & District Cllr Stephen Burroughes.

14/042 Declarations of Interest: AT & MP declared continuing pecuniary interests in CEA and Allotments matters, but are permitted to discuss and vote on these matters by clerk and members through a previous resolution.

14/043 Public Participation: The chairman welcomed John Parocki to his first council meeting as a new resident.

Police Report: a report had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting in the absence of a police representative. There have been no reported crimes between the period 01/01/2014 – 31/01/2014.

Suffolk Coastal District Council Report: a report, reproduced below, had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting in the absence of District Councillor Stephen Burroughes,:

- **District Moving forward with Boundary Changes**

Suffolk Coastal has submitted its proposals for the new warding arrangements and the reduction of Councillors from 55 to 42 to the Boundary Commission for its approval. A review had to take place in order to equalise the amount of 'electors' per District Council 'Ward' and Suffolk Coastal have put in their suggestions for the Boundary Commission to study. Reducing the number of councillors will save money and more fully engage councillors in the day to day running of the council.

- **Suffolk Coastal may move to new HQ**

A move to new offices is being considered by Suffolk Coastal Councillors. The current HQ in Melton are becoming costly to run, are not particularly accessible and not 'fit for purpose'. Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet are looking at options to see if a move to new premises is possible and how to make it happen without putting any cost onto the council tax payer.

- **NEW LOCAL ENABLING BUDGET FOR COASTAL AREA**

A new community enabling budget is being introduced across Suffolk Coastal District to help promote the core aims of the council, i.e., protecting the environment, promoting healthier lives, and increasing physical involvement of young people. It is seen as a way to significantly help promote active community involvement and applications for funding can be made to your District Councillor setting out the nature of the scheme, how it will be of benefit to your community, and how it will be delivered sustainably.

The County Council already operates a successful 'Locality' Scheme, which is vital in the Council's objective of supporting communities financially.

Suffolk County Council Report: a report, reproduced below, had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting in the absence of County Councillor Stephen Burroughes:

EXTRA BROADBAND FUNDING CONFIRMED FOR SUFFOLK

Suffolk is being given an extra £5million from the government to help make high-speed fibre broadband available to the hardest-to-reach communities.

Last month's announcement means that the Better Broadband for Suffolk programme, currently working to make superfast speeds (24 megabits per second (mbps) or more) available to 85% of the county, can start working towards a higher coverage target of up to 95%. At present, all properties in Suffolk have been promised speeds of at least 2 mbps by the end of 2015. In January 2014, SCC announced that it was inviting potential suppliers to discuss how they could deliver the additional work. A 'mini-competition' - separate to the current Better Broadband for Suffolk contract with BT - is now underway to identify a suitable supplier. The aim will be to complete the tendering process by the summer of 2014, and for works to start by the end of 2014 - in parallel with the on-going Better Broadband for Suffolk programme.

We have already promised at least 2mbps across all of Suffolk by the end of 2015. This extra funding will ensure that genuine super-fast speeds are available to more of Suffolk's hardest-to-reach communities.

- **SCC DELIVERS ON COUNCIL TAX FREEZE PLEDGE**

Suffolk's portion of council tax will be frozen at its 2010/11 level for the fourth year in a row, after the council voted through its budget proposals for 2014/15.

The council will be saving £38.6million over the next year to meet a budget gap caused by on-going reductions in government grant and increased demand for services. This is the first part of plans to save £156million over four years. Despite the tough financial climate, the council will be pushing ahead with important projects, such as 'Raising the Bar (driving up attainment levels in education), the roll-out of super-fast broadband across the whole of Suffolk, investing in apprenticeships, and supporting the development of 10 new, state-of-the-art care homes for older people. At the same time, the road maintenance budget - used for fixing potholes - has been protected from cuts. With plans to freeze council tax each year up to 2017, this will mean seven years with no increase. Keeping council tax down is the best way we can help people across Suffolk struggling to balance their budgets. We will continue to balance our books, manage money effectively and put Suffolk's tax payers first.

- **EMPLOYERS IN SUFFOLK URGED TO USE APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING**

Suffolk County Council, in partnership with the National Apprenticeship Service, is offering £1,500 to employers who employ 16-24 year-olds through the Apprenticeship programme.

While the number of apprenticeships on offer in Suffolk is rising, demand still outstrips supply, with an average ratio of eight applicants to every vacancy. Apprenticeships are becoming the route of choice for talented young people and there has never been a better time for employers to take advantage of this talent to help grow their business. Any business that has fewer than 1,000 employees and hasn't had an apprentice within the last 12 months could be eligible for the grant. Young people aged 16 - 24 are eligible under the scheme. To find out how to take advantage of these opportunities please contact the Apprenticeships Team on 01473 260922 or email at apprenticeships@suffolk.gov.uk

Improving the training opportunities for young people in Suffolk is vital for our long-term future. Apprenticeships are good for young people, good for the businesses and good for Suffolk and we are delighted to support this scheme.

- **SUFFOLK AWARDED FOR NATIONAL CARE2WORK PROGRAMME**

Suffolk has been recognised for its work on a national scheme which aims to improve the employability for young people leaving care.

Care2Work is a national programme funded by the government and carried out in partnership involving local authorities. Its aim is to ensure that the issue of employability is firmly on the corporate-parenting agenda, and so improve chances for all care leavers in making a success of their lives. The county council, in partnership with the Leaving Care service, was awarded the Care2Work Quality Mark, which recognises best practice and is awarded to local authorities and employers who demonstrate their commitment to building the employability skills of children in care and care leavers. Alongside work experience placements, young people are encouraged to complete the Route to Employment accredited learning which is internally assessed and verified and gives the young person a nationally recognised qualification.

We have a duty to support vulnerable people young and old. When young people leave care it is important we do all we can to help them secure a secure, long-term future in work, and this award is vindication of our efforts to achieve this.

- **RESIDENTS SET TO RECEIVE NEW TRAVEL BUS PASSES**

The deadline is approaching for the renewal of travel passes, and SCC Passenger Transport is urging residents to take time to note the renewal process for free-travel bus passes or travel vouchers that expire on 31 March 2014.

Residents with an age-related pass will automatically receive a new one without the need to complete any forms. Pass holders will this receive before 31 March 2014. Disabled-persons pass holders who qualify as a result of a disability which means they are unable to obtain a driving licence or have a long term effect on their ability to walk will have received a renewal form to complete. All other Disabled-persons pass holders will receive their new pass automatically before 31 March 2014. Residents who do not receive their new pass are urged to call the information line on 0845 6000659 after 31 March 2014. As an alternative to free travel passes, the council offers a benefit to those living in remote areas or with severe disability in the form of travel vouchers that can be used towards the cost of community transport, taxis or private hire vehicles. Travel voucher-holders will have received a renewal form, also for completion before 31st March 2014. Alternatively residents can opt to renew their vouchers online at: <http://www.suffolkonboard.com/concessionary-travel>

We are determined to help people stay connected and remain independent. We know that travel passes are a key part of this and we urge those who are entitled to them to fill in their renewal form as soon as possible.

There being no questions arising from the reports, the chairman moved the meeting into council mode.

14/044 Approval of Minutes: minutes of the council meeting on 17 February 2014 were approved by members subject to minor amendment, to be signed by the chairman at the next meeting.

14/045 Matters arising: (a) the chairman invited Ian Newton to declare his willingness to become a parish councillor representing Cookley, which he did, and he was elected unanimously by show of hands. (b) IN asked about ownership of footpaths. MP gave a brief summary of the situation whereby Highways keep them open; landowners keep hedges cut back.

14/046 Planning: There were no new planning applications. **Derelict Cottages, Cookley Road:** IN expressed concern as to the safety of scaffolding in place in connection with the demolition of the cottages. Clerk will bring this to the attention of the planners. Clerk will also make available details of the planning approval and plans to members so that development may be monitored informally. **Marsh View:** JW reported that bore hole drilling was complete. Issues raised by resident Tony Redman in an email to the clerk were considered. **South View:** clerk reported on the planning application that was likely to be refused on grounds of scale.

14/047 Finance: (a) RFO Report: clerk presented his report and financial statement.

The following invoice was approved and paid:

Clerk's Expenses £ 33.10

Receipt of £45.00 from Walpole & Cookley Playing Field Trust was noted in respect of SALC website training.

Balances to carry forward were submitted as under, taking into account the above:

Community Account £5,814.66

Business Saver £1,092.81 £6,907.47

Financial statement was approved unanimously by show of hands.

14/048 Highways: (a) MP expressed concern, shared by all members, at the increasing number of potholes. Clerk will take this up with SCC and try to arrange another joint inspection of roads in

the parish together with a Highways representative. **(b)** Clerk updated members on the church wall repairs where SCS Ltd were endeavouring to agree a way forward with the PCC. **(c)** Clerk advised on an apparent U-turn in policy by SCC as regards the supply of Variable Speed Indicators. SCC will no longer support the installation of permanent speed indicators. Clerk will pursue this with County Cllr Burroughes. **(d)** With regard to a letter received from a Beccles resident in respect of the proposed Sustrans cycle route, this was felt not to be a matter the parish council could assist with. However, comment was passed that plans with the suggested amendment to the route had been seen. Clerk will advise the letter writer accordingly. **(d)** MP reported that ZM had spoken to the owners of Holly Tree Farm who have realigned their hedging out of the ditch so as to permit free flow of storm water. This matter has been referred to in previous minutes.

14/049 Footpaths: deferred in the absence of BC.

14/050 Environment Agency: clerk reported that Mr Grimwood had updated him as to work needed by Walpole Bridge. The bird nesting season was now upon us and no action will be taken until August 2014. MP suggested clerk should follow up on the earlier river walk carried out with Environment Agency representatives leading to a detailed report. JW mentioned a limited amount of work had been carried out by Environment agency on the river near to his land.

14/051 Trees: Nothing to report.

14/052 Cemetery: Clerk awaiting further details of the process.

14/053 Cookpole Energy Action: (a) CEA: no report. **(b) Allotments:** AT reported that funds continue to come in and there was activity on the site.

14/054 Villages Together: clerk will bring a suggested informal agenda to the next meeting of the parish council and try to establish a new date for Villages Together in the lighter evenings. Matters previously suggested include: Flagship Housing, SALC Workshops in Walpole and Community Speedwatch.

14/055 Sizewell C Community Forum: clerk will attend the next meeting 27 March 2014.

14/056 Correspondence: clerk had received an email from resident Tony Redman, concerned as to the lack of fast broadband in the villages and enquiring about the fast broadband installed to the special needs school and regional educational offices in the village. MP said Mr Redman was right to be concerned as to broadband facilities and planning status. Clerk will pursue these issues with County Cllr Burroughes.

14/057 Future Agenda: (a) chairman opened the meeting and permitted John Parocki to speak as a member of the public regarding the dog poo bin on the village green. This bin is rusty and needs replacing. Members are open to investigating plastic bins. **(b)** Mr Parocki also mentioned drains on the hill roads which seem to be blocked and require clearing. **(c)** MP mentioned SALC training for new councillors. Clerk will obtain the latest programme.

14/058 Next Meeting: Parish Council meeting 28 April 2014.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Chairman

Date