

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday, 13th November 2017 at 7.00pm in Eyke Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Fleming, in the chair, Cllr Abu-Hejleh, Cllr Cushing, Cllr Stangoe, Cllr Thomas, Cllr Whitmore, Cllr Andrew Reid (7.40 – 8.10pm) and the clerk.

Apologies: Cllr Howlett-Thomson

Declarations of Interest: None.

In the absence of any members of the public, there was no adjournment for a parish forum.

Minutes: Those of 11th September 2017, having been previously circulated, were taken as read, agreed and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

1. Village Hall. Despite a rejection having been received from Land Registry for the application to claim adverse possession of the village hall, Cllr Cushing felt that this was probably the result of a lack of professional understanding of how to complete the forms. It was agreed that professional help should be sought from a conveyancer, in the first instance obtaining a quotation for the work. The clerk will contact a conveyancer who lives in Eyke and put the case to her.

2. Phone Box. The redundant phone box has been cleaned and the weeds around cleared. £600 has now been made available from Cllr Reid's Locality Budget for the purchase of the defibrillator, and a further £400 will be available in the new year to help with the purchase of the heated cabinet. The Millennium Group will be organising training in the New Year, starting on January 13th with a session for group members. As long as correct procedures are followed, the BT electricity supply can be used at no cost for the first few years. The other expenses to be covered are the costs for employing a decorator and electrician. Cllr Herring has promised £500 from his Enabling Communities fund, which should cover a large portion of this. It is hoped to have the defibrillator up and running by the spring.

3. Recreation Ground. Cllr Cushing is still chasing up the replacement of the basketball post. A problem was reported regarding the blue circular swing. This, along with photographs was reported to Sovereign Play, who have inspected and will be carrying out a repair to the swing shackles this week. Cllr Whitmore also reported a problem with the shackle on the small swing. The clerk will pass this on to Sovereign, and also give them contact telephone numbers for Cllrs Whitmore and Cushing.

4. Local Plan Review. Cllr Abu-Hejleh reported on this meeting with SCDC representatives which she attended with Cllr Cushing on 20th September. Over the next ten years, the proposed number of new houses in this area is 11,500, although not all the potential development land will be built on. They are obliged to build this number, 'unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits' [National Planning Policy Framework]. Computer modelling suggests people aged 30+ and those retiring come increasingly to live in Suffolk. The representatives from SCDC were non-committal about the deleterious effects on the AONB.

The major concern voiced by Cllrs Abu-Hejleh and Cushing was about infrastructure, particularly sewage and water, roads, car parking, schools and medical facilities. Cllr Cushing contacted Anglian Water, but they cited their information regarding sewage and water supply as 'confidential'. Regarding roads and traffic, SCDC said they take their advice from SCC, and schools and medical facilities are not within their remit. They are trying to deal with the lack of parking, but on the issue of second homes they admitted it was a problem which they did not know how to deal with.

(Cllr Reid arrived.)

5. Cllr Cushing brought up the issue of the planning permission, now granted, for the film studio at Bentwaters. The Parish Council's concern over the increased traffic was reported in the press, and he was interviewed by Radio Suffolk, although this material was not used. It was agreed by a majority to write to SCDC, to make a complaint and ask for explanations about their consultation processes and how they justify decisions in the face of negative impacts, which also contravene previously agreed limits.

He also felt that a face to face meeting with the Highways Department at SCC is desirable, in order to understand how the local roads are to cope with more traffic , particularly that generated by the provision of more housing. This was strongly supported by Cllr Reid, who suggested writing to the Acting Cabinet Member for Highways, Jane Storey, and SCDC Planning, with Cllr Reid copied in, saying that an explanation is needed for how road capacity is arrived at, and this is best done by a face to face meeting. This was agreed.

Reports:

1. Cllr Reid gave a brief report, highlighting the need to get a flu vaccination. GCSE and A level results are improving, and the county has risen by 24 places in the league table to 85th out of 151 authorities. There is a drive to promote fostering as Suffolk Fostering Service launches a recruitment campaign. Regarding the closure of Woods Lane, Melton, the development was only passed on appeal by the Planning Inspectorate. Neither SCDC nor SCC had supported it originally. The closure of Woods Lane was part and parcel of this. Regarding the length of time of the two closures, this is still uncertain, as issues such as longer working days versus a shorter total closure have to be balanced. The 3 month closure, January to April is worst case scenario, as Bloor Homes will want to avoid daily fines for exceeding the time. The clerk asked Cllr Reid's advice about the forthcoming legislative changes to the Data Protection Law, coming into force on 25th May 2018. There will be new rights and obligations relating to hard copy and electronic management of personal data. There is a great deal of information coming through at the moment, with conflicting advice on whether the clerk can be the Data Protection Officer. Cllr Reid will look further into this.

(Cllr Reid left.)

2. SNT Meeting: 14.9.17. Cllr Whitmore attended this.

Other matters:

1. The next SNT meeting is on 23.11.17, 10.30am at Woodbridge Police Station. Cllr Whitmore will attend.

2. Station House Campsea Ashe. This is now open after 5 years of work and fund raising. There is a cafe, and rooms available to book for meetings etc. They are launching their own programme to provide support in the area, starting with a computer club for 11-16year olds, and a free homework and self-supported study group. The annual passenger footfall through the station is over 44,000, so leaflets, magazines etc are very welcome for passengers to pick up. Cllr Abu-Hejleh confirmed that she had visited and it is proving a valuable asset.

Finance:

1. Cheques were agreed: MJH Garden and Tree Services (annual car park grass cutting, and hedge trimming): £460.00; Mr S Lucas (mower repair, paid by him to Ernest Doe): £136.55; Community Action Suffolk (website hosting): £60.00; Mr S Lucas (mower fuel): £25.00. It was noted that the final amount paid to Community Action Suffolk for insurance was £588.39.

Thanks were expressed to Cllr Whitmore, who helps every year with the cutting of the car park hedge. This saves the village in the region of £70.

2. Account balances at 3.11.17:Community Account; £14,997.61; Business Premium Account: £118.03; Rate Reward: £8520.58. Cheque 100666 for £18.70 remains to be cashed.

3. Councillors were reminded that the budget will need to be agreed and the precept set at the January meeting.

To receive items for information:

1. Cllr Thomas provided an update regarding the Elephant and Castle. An application is being prepared by Cllr. Thomas's partner to register the pub with SCDC as an Asset of Community Value. This could help to protect it as a pub, in the event of someone wishing to apply for change of use. The community spirit which Ian and Sandra did so much to foster is being maintained, with a group organising a very successful quiz in the hall last Saturday, and there will be a party in the hall on New Year's Eve, for which tickets are available at £5 each. An interest in purchasing and running the pub has been expressed by a local person, and the property viewed. The due process is likely to take a significant amount of time.

2. Cllr Stangoe wondered if the Parish Council should host an event to boost awareness of what the parish council does within the village. Councillors felt this was something to keep under review. The lack of interest and attendance at meetings is not a new phenomenon, and the organisation of such an event would inevitably mean a great deal of work for a few people.

Date of next meeting:

It was agreed to move the date of the next meeting by a week, to 15th January, since the 1st falls on a Monday and it will allow more time to prepare after Christmas.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.