

CULFORD, WEST STOW AND WORDWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Culford, West Stow and Wordwell Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 23rd November 2017

Present: Clr Joy Childs, Clr D Fisher, Clr B Murdoch, Clr K Ramsey, Clr R Salt, Clr M McQueen, J Milward (Clerk) and 1 members of the public.

Public Discussion Public member again raised the subject of work still not completed along the North Stow road and the fact that nothing had been done with regard to speeding although a traffic survey had been promised. He would continue to press Cle Hopfensperger on the matter as would the council.

Officers' Reports

Borough Councillor: Clr Susan Glossop reported on the following points:

- a. The Borough Council has bought the Post Office building and plans are going ahead for development there.
- b. They have also purchased land along Beetons Way and that will become a large development site
- c. The West Suffolk Hub application was approved by council and that has now been passed to Secretary of State for approval.
- d. Had received complaint from Rev Tim Jones of West Stow who was upset because his children had to walk down to the T junction to catch the school bus. He wanted to know if the bus pick-up point could be changed to the junction with Cornwallis Close. She had raised the subject with Clr Hopfensperger and also suggested that were the grass to be cut on either side of the road in question then children would be able to walk along the grass verge. Regrettably no reply had as yet been received.

At this point the Clerk read out the contents of emails received from Clr Ann Self since they also referred to items that had been raised by her with the resident at West Stow Lodge and also with Clr Rebecca Hopfensperger. A reply by Clr Hopfensperger to Clr Self's correspondence was also read out. This outlined work which was proposed for the parish area and the fact that her budget was only £6,666 to cover 14 parishes

Obviously this contradicts much of which has been said and promised before.

County Councillor – Clr Rebecca Hopfensperger not in attendance but submitted the following report which was read out at the meeting:

The highways department has gone through a full restructure and the new structure was implemented in October this year. This has resulted in the re-location of the highways department for the west of the county being re-located to the Rougham highways depot. I hope that the clerk has sent through to all of you the email I circulated to all my parishes with regards to the reporting system for highway issues and the route to take for escalating issues.

I would advise wherever possible to use the online reporting system you receive a report number which can be tracked for progress. The new structure makes it simpler particularly for me to escalate and troubleshoot issues and I should say that so far it has proved quite effective.

I have met with John Simpson who is head of the councillors locality highway budget dept, he has been in post since September when the whole highways department was re-organised. By way of an explanation there is now no central budget for the delivery of local highway schemes and everything should now be funded from my highways locality budget, I receive £6,666 pa which has cover all 14 parishes in my division. To put this amount in to perspective the scheme for the street in Culford will cost in the region of £8,500 so you can see that my budget does not go very far. Moving onto particular highway schemes for the parish, the work has been ordered for the street, the clerk is liaising with the department with regards to the parishes contribution to the scheme which I am grateful for as it helps the money go further. Rough time scales for the delivery of this scheme is the new year, which is a slight delay due to departmental changes and regulation changes with regards to what we are allowed to do on the highways.

I have managed to move forward the work planned for West Stow to this financial year, recognising the importance of issues in this village, designs are currently being finalised looking at the school bus stop points in the village along with associated signage to assist with safer routes for the children accessing the bus stop with the potential of looking two bus stops to services both ends of the village preventing children walking from one end of the parish to another. The scheme will also look at the junction between Icklingham Road and Ingham Road and HGVs using the area, we are exploring options with regards to HGV warning signage and assessing the road with regards to its HGV suitability and the damage/safety risk HGVs pose and lineage. It is likely that this scheme will cost in the region of £6,000, so I hope you will see that the parish will be receiving the majority of my highways budget allocation.

With regards to speeding in the area, in particular in the North Stow and Wordwell area, I have commissioned and paid for a safety/traffic review on the area to get some data which can be used to tackle any traffic management/speed enforcement measures.

With regards to SCC's budget it is likely that for the next financial year we will propose a 1.99% rise in your council tax the first after seven years council tax freeze. This will result in an extra £1.14 per week for band D properties and 88p per week for band B properties, with a proposal to apply the 3% adult social care precept again this year and there is a further £27 million of savings needed to balance the budget. These proposals will be going to scrutiny on Thursday but will not be finalised until the full council in February.

With regards to home to school transport consultation which was proposed to start in September, to apply the statutory requirement for home to school transport to that of your nearest school. This decision was called in by scrutiny due to a lack of pre-consultation. A further paper will be going to cabinet in December and if approved the consultation will commence that month.

In response to this report the council want further information on costings with regard to works proposed for both West Stow and Culford,

Parish Council Agenda

1. Apologies Clr Ann Self

2. Declaration of Interest: Nil declarations.

3. Dispensations: Nil required

4. Minutes: Unanimously agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2017 be passed as a true record.

5. a. Clerk's Report

- (i) White House stables sign – sign removed and reported to Highways
- (ii) Blocked drainage reported to Highways
- (iii) Hedge outside of The Hollies reported to Highways
- (iv) Trees along The Street in Culford. Reported to Highways who claim that noted but rep from BT needs to be in attendance

b. Report by Clr Fisher on SALC AGM Clr Fisher updated the Council on the SALC AGM held earlier in the month. One of the main points to be noted is that the council must appoint a data protection officer. It was agreed that this would be the clerk who would attend a course in January 2018

c. Report on the West Suffolk Parish Forum held on 16th November 2017 was given by Clr Salt. Adverse comments on the subject content and presentation were made by Chairman, clerk and Borough Councillor who had all attended the meeting.

6. Highways Clr Murdoch raised the subject of new lighting installed but not working. He will raise again with Highways.

7. Planning

a. Application No DC/17/2239/TPO – Fell one chestnut tree, Rushwood, Flempton Bridge Carr - Approved

b. Application No DC/17/2325/TCA – fell 5b trees and crown lift 5 silver birches to 2.5 metres – Approved.

c. Application No DC/17/2384/TCA – fell 1 chestnut tree, West Stow Hall – Approved

d. Application No DC/17/2409/TCA – reduce height of 9 conifers to 8 metres, Ambirwoods, Chimney Mills – Approved

e. Application No DC/17/2211/HH – cladding to part of front elevation, Oakcroft, The Street, Culford – approved

f. Application No DC/17/2200/HH – Conversion of timber framed garage/workshop and 1st floor office into a residential annexe ancillary to the main dwelling including addition of pitched roof and porch to front elevation, Welham Cottage, Ingham Road, Culford - Approved

8. Finance

a. Cheques were approved and signed for HMRC, Clerk's wages and expenses, M&TJs (grass cutting) SALC AGM and Viking.

b. Consideration was given to the council's budget and precept for the year 2018/19. The following budget was agreed for the year 2018/19 :

Clerk's wages £3,500, Fees and Subs £400, Training ££250, Clerk's Expenses £100, Stationery £400, Grants £2,000, Insurance £390, Section 137 £425, Internal Auditor £75, Maintenance £100, Grass Cutting £1,000, Future Projects £650

c. It was agreed that precept for the year 2018/19 should be kept at £9290 with the Budget Figure for future projects be decreased to £650

9. Councillors' reports and items for future agenda.

a. Clr Fisher gave an update on Neighbourhood watch and also need for people to sign up to Police Connect

b. Clr Fisher also reported on Remembrance Day Service at Culford

Meeting closed at 9.35pm Date of Next Meeting 25th January 2018