

Culford, West Stow and Wordwell Parish Council

MINUTES

of the Meeting held at Culford Village Hall on

Thursday 25th November 2021

Present: Councillors: Rachael Salt (Chair), David Fisher, Paul Luke, Bruce Murdoch, and Paul Turnill

In attendance: Maximilian Clay (Clerk to the Council)
District Cllr Susan Glossop (part) and County Cllr Rebecca Hopfensperger (part)

26. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Joy Childs and the reason approved.

27. Declarations of Interest

- a. There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda.
- b. There were no declarations of Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda.

28. Minutes

- a. The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2021 were agreed to be a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them as such on behalf of the Council.

29. District and County Councillor Reports

- a. District Councillor Glossop reported that there was not a great deal to convey because, as normal at this time of year, the main focus was on working up next year's budget and preparations for Christmas. While the very large scale Christmas Market was not being mounted this year other, smaller scale, events would take place. D Cllr Glossop reported that the shops in Bury St Edmunds were holding up well but that shops in some of the smaller centres in the area were noticing a significant downturn in trade. In conclusion, Cllr Glossop told the meeting that she and C Cllr Hopfensperger were keen to support events to mark the Queen's Jubilee celebrations from their locality funds. D Cllr Glossop also mentioned that she was pleased to see that the drive into the West Stow Church had now been completed but thought that it may need to be a little wider. Cllr Luke responded that this had been attended to.
- b. County Councillor Hopfensperger reported that Suffolk had been made an Enhanced Response Area in relation to Covid. There are no restrictions as such but additional information and guidelines have been circulated and schools are exercising extra precautions. In relation to the current problem of HGVs using the road through the village instead of following the diversions arising from night time works on the A14, C Cllr Hopfensperger reported that she had been actively engaged in trying to address the problem and that improved signage and enforcement of the temporary weight restriction were being increased.

Both Councillors asked for their best wishes for a speedy recovery to be passed to Cllr Childs.

30. Diverted HGVs Through Culford

A very large amount of heavy traffic is passing through Culford due to night closures on the A14 and drivers not following the diversion route. The noise and vibrations are causing great inconvenience to residents whose sleep is being disturbed. Damage is also being caused to properties along the road. There seemed to have been minimal enforcement.

The Clerk informed the meeting that Highways England would now be paying the Police Authority to mount additional patrols. It was noted that HGVs using the B1106 through the village in contravention of the weight restriction were breaking the law and that they could be reported as such by residents.

In discussion, there was great concern about the ongoing nature of this problem and this would be monitored closely. It agreed that residents should be encouraged to report problems and information about what the Council is doing to try to stop the problem and how to report will be disseminated via the Culford WhatsApp group.

31. Public Forum

No matters were raised.

32. Clerk's Report & Administrative Business

a. There were no decisions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting.

b. The Clerk reported that:

- ◆ Covid-related guidance had been increased in the light of the spike in infections within the county and that a leaflet had been circulated to every household. Stricter guidance had also been introduced in all maintained schools.
- ◆ Correspondence had been received from a resident about the new towers at Eastern Concrete but it has emerged that the Planning Authority had already informed the resident that the works were carried out permitted development and are acceptable because the towers are less than 15 metres high.
- ◆ Correspondence had been received about an accrual of junk and scrap cars at Little Farm but it had been difficult to locate the premises - this will be followed up.
- ◆ Further complaints had been received about HGV traffic emanating from Eastern Concrete. Although there is little that can be done to limit operating licenses, the Council was hopeful that matters could be improved via the HGV review (see below).
- ◆ A letter had been received from the Village Hall Committee hoping that should an enclosed venue be sought for the Jubilee celebrations, they would be hopeful that the Hall would be the first choice.
- ◆ The County Council has issued a general consultation to the public seeking views about what should be prioritised when the County Council budget is considered.
- ◆ Preliminary exploration about the conservation area and the possibility of an Article 4 direction has started and would be reported on further at a future meeting.
- ◆ The Vehicle activated sign continued to give problems and it may be that a new sign will be needed, possibly on a discounted basis.
- ◆ The Council's office will be moving to 51 St Johns Street, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1SP with a new phone number 07514 33 41 49.

33. Planning & Environment

a. **Planning Application Consultations:**

- i **DC/21/2107/HH Grove Cottage, North Stow, West Stow:** a. replacement pitched roof to existing side extension b. part two storey and part single storey rear extension.

In discussion it was noted that, although the extent of the development is significant, the site is well screened from the road and there had been no objections from neighbours posted. It was resolved to support the application.

- ii **DC/21/2128/HH 4 The Drift Culford:** a. two storey side and rear extension (following removal of existing conservatory); b. demolition of front porch; c. conversion of existing outbuilding to carport.

In discussion it was noted that subject property is a small semi-detached estate type cottage in poor condition and with many and various later additions. The result of the additions was considered unsympathetic jumble and it was agreed that the changes would be a visual improvement.

The proposal to create an entrance /carport through the existing outbuilding was discussed. The outbuilding forms the boundary of the property onto the Drift itself and is part of a larger structure, with the remainder of the building belonging to the neighbouring property to the

east.

Number 4 The Drift has stood empty for some time and this may be because of the problems of vehicular access in a position where there are few alternatives for parking. On balance it was felt that the proposed work would make for a sensible and usable dwelling and would assist in problems of parking on The Drift itself. The Council resolved to support the application.

- b. To receive any update report(s) on planning applications considered previously.
 - i **DC/21/1768/TCA - The Rectory, Ingham Road, West Stow:** Trees in a conservation area notification. Granted.
 - ii **DC/21/1630/HH - Rushwood, Flempton Bridge Carr, West Stow:** a. substitute two previously approved roof windows with dormer windows b. demolish existing chimney stack and replace with twin wall flue c. additional flue in annex roof. Consideration ongoing.
 - iii **DC/21/1828/TCA - Brockley Cottage, Brockley Corner, Brandon Road, Culford:** Trees in a conservation area notification **Updates on Previous Applications.** Granted.

34. Village Signs

The condition of various village signs was discussed. The post of the decorative West Stow sign is damaged and it was resolved to undertake remedial work by reinforcing the post with metal. Councillor Luke was mandated to approach a nearby resident who has the skills to undertake the work and an allowance of up to £100 was agreed to cover the costs.

The North Stow boundary sign was knocked down some while ago and although the Wordwell boundary sign itself is in reasonable condition but the posts are rotting. The County Council has suspended the replacement of any signs that are not mandatory and these signs do not fall in to that category.

It was resolved that the Highways department would be approached to replace the North Stow signs and posts and if they were unwilling to undertake the work at their own costs, to obtain a quote for the work for consideration at the next meeting. The Clerk will find out if Parish Council can be granted authority to deal with the posts on the Wordwell sign.

35. Queen's Platinum Jubilee - Big Lunch

Cllr Murdoch updated the meeting on the development of a PC working group to plan and manage the event on 5th June, the special bank holiday weekend.

After discussion, the proposed membership of the group was resolved to be as follows:

Name	Role	Interest Represented
Bruce Murdoch	Chair	PC (Culford)
Max Clay	Member & Secretary	PC
Nick Maunder	Member	Culford School
Paul Luke - West Stow	Member	PC (West Stow)
David Fisher	Member	Culford Club
Tony Bate	Member	Culford Village Hall

It was agreed that nearer the event it will probably be beneficial to add to the membership and/ or develop sub groups but it was agreed that the above membership would be sufficient for the time being.

An initial discussion had been held with Nick Maunder (COO at Culford School) and the School is keen to support the event and are willing for it to take place in the Park.

After further discussion it was resolved that:

- a. A survey of what residents would like could be helpful that a survey via Survey Monkey would be carried out and that this would be advertised, including the use of QR code links.
- b. The present the idea of having a bring-and-share picnic would be discussed at the first meeting of the working group along with other ideas for consideration and discussion - for example,

whether to have a hog roast, ice cream van and burger van; a disco or a live band and a paid for bar). (Other practicalities were also mentioned but will be discussed in detail by the working group.)

- c. Once the Group had met for the first time it would be possible to share ideas via email but it would be important for key decisions to be made and minuted by the Working Group as whole, for reasons of accountability.
- d. A draft budget will be developed by the working group and proposed to the Council, as will a risk assessment in due course.
- e. The Working Group will bring proposals and costing options to the next meeting of the Council.

35. Lorry Route Review

The form of the consultation is unhelpful because the scope for free text is very limited but the meeting discussed the most significant problems. C Cllr Hopfensperger underlined the importance of offering workable alternatives to any problems.

In discussion it was felt that if the two A roads that run roughly parallel to the B1106 (i.e. the A1101 and A134) were used for HGVs the problems affecting the villages would be eliminated.

It was agreed that Councillors would get their thoughts to the Clerk within a week and that residents would also be encouraged to submit their views to the Clerk so that a comprehensive response could be made by the Clerk prior to the mid-December deadline.

36. Classic Car Event in Culford Park

The Clerk reported that he had had a very helpful and constructive meeting with the organisers of the event, Bury Abbey Rotary (BAR), about next year's event. BAR had clearly understood (and were very apologetic about) the inconvenience that had arisen to villagers and had already planned to try to ensure that this did not happen next year.

Part of the problem had been that the level of attendance had unexpectedly increased by over 50% (to about 6,500 people) and to cope with that there will be additional entrance staff so as to minimise queues backing onto the road. An improved traffic plan was discussed, and this will allow cars to enter from either driveway, with different parking arrangements, to support faster flow. The Clerk felt that everything that could be done to avoid problems at the next event had been considered and planned for.

At the meeting BAR presented the Clerk with a donation of £500 towards the Village Hall fund and this has been passed on to the Committee.

37. Wildlife Friendly Village

Cllr Salt reported that seven hedgehog boxes have been bought and six of them allocated. Seven bat boxes had also been acquired - the total cost had been greater than the allocated fund and Cllr Salt had donated the balance.

Village Co-ordinators still need to be appointed but this has not been possible because of Covid related restrictions and will be the priority once possible.

38. Welcome Pack

Following the previous meeting Cllr Murdoch had decided to step back from working on the pack. Since then a significant amount of work had been done by the Clerk and Cllr Salt and there are largely only cosmetic changes remaining. A revised version will be brought back to a future meeting.

39. Finance

a. Bank Reconciliation and Summary Accounts: The Council resolved to receive the Bank Reconciliation and Summary Accounts for the first half of the year.

b. Budget Planning: The budget will be considered in detail at the January meeting so that the Precept request can be made on time. This was preliminary discussion, in the light of the current year budget and the projected outcome for the year, with the object of determining whether the Council has particular plans or proposals that it would like to see provided for in the draft budget

or whether the Council would prefer to adopt a conservative approach and simply aim to inflation-proof the current year's budget.

It is anticipated that there will be in the region of about £19,000 in the reserves at the end of the current year, against a reasonable minimum reserves provision of about £11,000.

A discussion about grants followed and a substantive item will be included in the next agenda. In the meantime it was highlighted that giving the same grants to the same organisations year after year was against good practice as organisations should not come to expect grants from the council each year and the Council is under an obligation to distribute grant funds more widely.

- c. Schedule of Receipts and Payments:** A question was asked about the areas of grass that are included in the grass-cutting contract and it was clarified that there are three areas: the Triangle, the area opposite it and the grass in front of the village hall around the war memorial.

The Council resolved to receive the schedule of receipts and payments and to approve the payments.

40. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

The lighting from the school sports areas continues to cause a nuisance to residents and will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Two other items were suggested for the next agenda: replacement of the tree outside Toad House and the purchase of high visibility vests for litter pickers.

Cllr Salt reported that there are now over 50 puzzles in the Jigsaw Library.

It was noted that an Emergency Plan Village Co-ordinator is still needed for West Stow.

The meeting resolved to send very best wishes for a speedy recovery to Cllr Childs.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.26pm

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council

Chair

Date