

BRADFIELD ST CLARE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON 14th MAY 2019 IN THE VILLAGE HALL.

The Annual Parish Council Meeting was held on 14th May 2019 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: John Kirk, Margaret Newlands, Glyn Thomas, Malcolm Hignett, Paul Foster , together with County Cllr Soons and Borough Cllrs Mildmay-White (both provided reports at the Annual Parish Meeting earlier that evening), and the Parish Clerk, Nicola Smith. Also present was PC Paul Fox and Area B NHW Co-Ordinator Mr Andrew Tucker.

1. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman:

Cllr Newlands proposed Cllr Kirk as Chairman. Cllr Thomas seconded the proposal. Cllr Kirk confirmed he was willing to accept the role of Chairman.

Cllr Thomas proposed Cllr Newlands as Vice Chair, and Cllr Foster seconded that proposal. Cllr Newlands confirmed that she was willing to accept the role of Vice Chair.

2. Signing of Acceptance of Office Forms: All Cllrs duly signed their Acceptance of Office form before the Proper Officer of the Parish Council.

3. Apologies: None

4. Declarations of Interest: None

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2019: Cllr Thomas proposed and Cllr Foster seconded that the Minutes were a true and accurate record.

6. Matters arising:

Proposed Speed Limit in some areas of the village was ongoing. SCC Highways had now commenced the Legal Notice that was a statutory requirement. The Legal Notice expired on 15th May (day after this PC Meeting). County Cllr Karen Soons updated that Cllr Mary Evans had a meeting scheduled for 15th May to progress to the next steps, and Cllr Soons would update the Parish Clerk as soon as she had information about those next steps.

Blocked Drain on Bradfield St George Road – the drain that had compacted soil and weeds growing out of it had been cleared. Local farmer had dug out the ditch to help with draining away of rain water, and it was quite possible that he had also cleared out the drain in that process. County Cllr Soons indicated that if Cllrs wanted to go to the Rougham Depot (local SCC highways depot) to discuss any highways matter then she could arrange an appointment. Following discussion Cllrs agreed that for now they did not need a meeting but it was noted that possibly in the future for ongoing highways matters such as blocked drains and potholes that a meeting at Rougham may be a quicker solution.

Signed.....

Dated.....

7. Police Report:

PC Paul Fox attended the meeting along with Mr Andrew Tucker (Area B NHW Co-Ordinator). The following report was provided.

The Bury St Edmunds Neighbourhood Watch Area B covering 10 local villages in 6 parishes continues to enjoy a very low reported crime rate. 2018 saw a reported crime rate averaging 6 per month for the whole of our Area B. The first quarter of this year has seen an average of 5 reported crimes per month. In 2018 Bradfield St Clare saw a total of just 3 reported crimes (two burglaries and one criminal damage) giving the village the lowest reported crime rate in the area.

Looking at the last 3 years and considering the 4 most common crimes we see, the Area B number of reported crimes for burglary and violence or sexual for 2018 were very similar to the 2016 figures while the 2018 figures for criminal damage or arson and vehicle crime were half those of 2016. This is good news for our area but it doesn't reflect what is happening across the whole of Suffolk where reported crime in 2018 was up by 9% on the previous year with a big increase in the number of burglaries (up by more than 30%).

Most will know that cold caller scams by telephone, text, email etc are now prolific and the advice remains that we should never engage with a cold caller, no matter who they say they are representing, iff they are asking for either a payment or for personal bank details. Contact from scammers should be reported to Action Fraud on-line or by telephone (0300 123 2040) as well as letting your Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator know so others can be warned.

Our local Area B NHW network (sharing local crime, suspicious activity and missing persons detail as well as receiving monthly local crime statistics and much more) is incredibly healthy and pro-active. For example, nearly 1000 residents in our local villages are signed up to the highly recommended social site called nextdoor.com where the site is tailored to our very local area with neighbours looking after neighbours. Another 200 neighbours in Bradfield Combust and Stanningfield use their parish Facebook page to report and stay abreast of local crime issues and another approximately 100 residents in local villages choose to receive updates via e-mail. Of course, there will be even more sharing of crime information within each village and parish as they see fit.

In summary, our local crime rate is very low compared to the rest of the Bury St Edmunds area, the County and Nationally. That said, we should not get complacent of course and we should remain vigilant with regards all types of crime, including scams, and continue to communicate with each other within and between our villages.

Signed.....

Dated.....

8. Public Forum: no members of the public present.
9. Correspondence:
- i. Trees near the green on Bradfield St George Road – Cllr Thomas had provided the Clerk with a map that will be forwarded on to both the County and Borough Cllr in order that they can get any relevant departments to try to ascertain who owns the land the trees are on and are therefore liable to maintain them. Clerk will update in due course.
 - ii. Legal Notice from SCC dated 24 April 2019 regarding the proposed speed limit in the village (copy on the village Notice Board) – Legal Notices expires on 15th May (see matters arising in these Minutes).

10. Clerk's Report:

Clerk gave her apologies to the PC, as she had been unwell for the last few weeks so the Report was short and Cllrs agreed to an additional meeting in June, mainly for purposes of dealing with the Annual Governance and Audit Report for 2018/19, and also two new planning matters that had been received the day before this meeting.

- i. Following discussion, it was agreed to have three signatories for the PC cheque book/account: Cllr Thomas was already a signatory and Cllr Kirk and Cllr Foster.
- ii. Schedule of items awaiting approval and authorization – June meeting (date to be agreed);
- iii. To approve expenditure for grass cutting, grant to PCC and the Grapevine. Following discussion Cllr Kirk proposed and Cllr Thomas seconded that all payments remain the same in 2019/20 – Clerk will organise for cheques to be available for approval at the June meeting;
- iv. Audit update – June meeting (see above).

11. Review and approve Standing Orders and Financial Orders:

Clerk advised no new updates to protocol documents on the SALC website. Cllrs reviewed and approved the existing Standing Orders and Financial Orders.

12. Councillors Reports:

Cllr Hignett reported the following:

Discussion with Openreach regarding a resident's request to upgrade to Superfast Broadband.

The email thread regarding my approaches to Openreach has been circulated to all Councillors. The last email sent to Aaron Smith, Infrastructure Solutions Customer Service – Fibre Enquiries was on 1 May 2019 saying:-

“Since I have not received a reply to my email dated 19 March 2019 I am contacting you again to find out what progress there is to install Superfast Broadband to a residents home, and provide the facility for another 4 properties

Signed.....

Dated.....

at the junction of Bury Road/Bradfield St George Road. As indicated in my last email to you, we have a Parish Council Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 14 May 2019 and I would like to report back that BT/Openreach is seriously addressing this issue. I'm sure you understand that it is unfair and inequitable to ignore the requests of residents in the village to upgrade to Superfast Fibre broadband when most of the village is now enjoying this essential facility.

If there is no progress on this issue by the time we hold our Parish Council Meeting in 2 weeks time I will be recommending to the Council that we escalate the matter via Borough and County Councillor and our local MP Jo Churchill."

Councillors discussed this matter, and it was noted that whilst we know of these five properties that do not have Superfast Broadband there may well be others in the village that also do not have it. Cllr Hignett agreed to look further into this. It was agreed that Cllr Hignett would forward the email thread with Openreach to County Cllr Karen Soons who will look into the matter, but if necessary Cllr Hignett will raise the matter with MP Jo Churchill.

Cllr Hignett also made a request to the Parish Council to consider a proposal for an event(s) to recognise and raise awareness of the consequences of climate change, its effects on the environment moving to a 'zero waste economy'. This followed on from Cllr Hignett seeing a 4 minute graphics show on 'Earth Day', and how this related to other works he had seen in the 1980 (so not a new issue but one that has not been addressed. There had been recent press about the global emergencies we are facing and the need to take immediate remedial action. In the light of the recent interventions in the media and Parliament by teenage activist Greta Thunberg, the 'Extinction Rebellion' protests, together with the 'Mothers Rise Up' demonstrations in London last weekend, maybe the Parish Council might wish to consider organizing an event or events in the Village leading up to Earth Day on 22 April 2020 to raise awareness of this emergency and maybe offer pointers, in some small way, to what we can do in response.

Following discussion Cllr Hignett agreed to give the matter further as to how awareness/events could be implemented and discuss further at the next PC Meeting.

13. Date of next meeting: Additional Meeting in June (date to be confirmed) and thereafter 13 August 2019.

Signed.....

Dated.....