

BRADFIELD ST CLARE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2021

AT 7PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

The Chairman Cllr J Kirk welcomed the following Cllrs: Alex Duchesne and Sue Partridge. County Cllr Karen Soons present. Borough Cllr Sara Mildmay-White present. Two members of the public attended the meeting. Clerk was not present at the meeting, due to ill health, but had continued to work on behalf of the Parish Council and prepare work for the meeting, and brief Cllrs on Agenda items ahead of the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence: – Cllr Malcolm Hignett and Cllr Paul Foster both sent their apologies. Apologies accepted.
2. Declarations of Interest: – No declarations of interest.
3. Minutes: Minutes of the meeting on 10 August 2021 – Cllr Duchesne proposed and Cllr Kirk seconded that they were a true and accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters arising/updates from previous meetings:

<u>Matter</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Next steps</u>
Overgrown grass strip of land between the asphalt parking area and the Anglian Water treatment plant	Clerk has provided Cllrs with the Land Registry documents that were obtained in 2017 in order to seek to establish who owns that land.	<i>Letter sent to relevant landowners indicating that if we had heard no further by 9 November then we would assume that they had no objection to the PC helping them maintain that strip of land to keep it tidy and looked after. Only one response received by telephone and they confirmed they had no objection.</i> <i>PC agreed that they would assist with keeping that area looked after for now.</i>
Flooding within particular areas of the village.	Clerk has liaised with County Cllr Karen Soons and Simon Curl (Flood and Water Manager at SCC). The Environment Agency has passed the Parish Council's enquiry to SCC as	<i>Chair Cllr Kirk, Cllr Foster and Cllr Hignett attended a site meeting with Simon Curl from SCC on 9 September.</i> <i>Cllrs have seen suggestions from Simon Curl as follows:-</i> <i>(1) Drains outside of Groveberries. It is suggested that the drains are in need of some attention and this should be reported to Highways for them to clear the drains and then the PC look at a</i>

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	<p>it relates to surface water flooding issues. SCC Flood and Water Manager, Mr Simon Curl considers that the incidents of flooding that the PC reports “appear to be a combination of ditch flooding/capacity and road drains/gullies not working properly.” Mr Curl has offered a site meeting to discuss the matters.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">30/2021</p> <p><i>“maintenance plan” that they can implement. Reported. No: 00340211</i></p> <p><i>(2) Drains by St Clare Cottages/Tower Cottages. As above, but would suggest reporting to Highways as a “kerb outlet”. Also queries whether there is a drainage pipe running underground in front of Tower Cottages as there was initially a ditch there which would have been filled in when the Cottages were constructed. If this is the case then the landowner would be responsible for maintenance of the pipe and keeping it clear. Reported. No: 00340212</i></p> <p><i>Cllrs were advised by the 2 x members of the public attending the meeting and that if this is a ‘piped ditch’ then it is the responsibility of the SCC Highways Department.</i></p> <p><i>Clerk is to clarify responsibility for this ditch.</i></p> <p><i>(3) Church Lane and across Bury Road – following on to Bridge House and Flaxmans. Same plan as set out at number (1). Reported. No: 00340215 and 00340213</i></p> <p><i>Cllr Partridge noted that her neighbours on Bury Road had been advised very firmly by the Council litter-picking coordinator <u>not</u> to pick along this road because of safety concerns; this is at odds with the suggestion that villagers should undertake ditch/gully maintenance on the same road! All present agreed that there would be significant safety concerns about villagers undertaking these works anywhere in the village.</i></p>
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		<p style="text-align: right;">31/2021</p> <p>(4) Small Bridge, Bury Road – between the junction of Bradfield St George Road and Cockfield Green Road – this falls within the parish of Cockfield. Clerk has forwarded on details to Cockfield Parish Councils together with the information provided by Simon Curl regarding ‘maintenance plans’.</p>
<p>Community Speed Watch</p>	<p>Clerk to make contact with new Community Engagement Officer.</p>	<p>(1) Accepted offer from PC Lee Andrews-Pearce for him to come to the village and carry out speed enforcement which he has confirmed that he will do.</p> <p>(2) Clerk has emailed communityspeedwatch@suffolk.police.uk in order to register the PCs interest to start up a CSW.</p> <p>(3) County Cllr Karen Soons had emailed contact with Tuddenham PC to see if they were interested in sharing or selling their CSW ‘speed gun’. No response. Clerk chased and the Tuddenham PC Clerk is on indefinite leave at the present time. Clerk telephoned their Chairman and left message for a call back. No call back, as of yet.</p> <p>(4) PC Lee Andrews-Pearce confirms that he is happy to do a community event in the village to give information about CSW scheme which may prompt people to volunteer. Clerk to arrange that event in 2022 and in line with any covid restrictions in place at the time.</p> <p>The Clerk had received further information about the requirements for the CSW, including minimum of six volunteers, the appointment of a local co-ordinator, vetting of the areas to be monitored, and training. It was agreed that the PC may not be able to recruit the required number of volunteers. Police information posters about the scheme have been put on the village noticeboard,</p>

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		32/2021 <i>and an article written for the Grapevine; to await response to this.</i>
Road surface on the bridge, Bury Road.	The road surface has potholes and there is a long straight lateral crack which could readily allow water to penetrate into the brick structure beneath the road surface.	<i>Cllr Partridge has provided the Clerk with photographs.</i> <i>Clerk has reported on to the SCC Highways Reporting Tool under reference 331608. Repairs have now been made to the road surface. The bridge is the responsibility of Highways England Historic Railways Estate. The options are significant repairs, or removal of the bridge with infilling of the embankment – the latter being favoured by the HE Engineer. The Engineer has enquired as to whether the PC knew of any plans for the bridge. The PC do not.</i>
Large hole in the verge near the footpath by the Water Tower.	Very large hole. Parishioner has placed an orange cone in it so that people are aware.	<i>Clerk reported on the SCC Highways Reporting Tool under reference 329374. Reported on 21/07/2021. Works ordered on 21/07/2021. Works priority – 14 calendar weeks from date works ordered.</i> <i>Works have now been completed, but the PC thought this could have been carried out by a villager rather than Highways, because of the materials used for the in-filling.</i>

5. Borough and County Cllr reports: reports received and distributed to Parish Cllrs ahead of the meeting. The reports can be viewed on the village website at bradfieldstclare.onesuffolk.net/
- County Cllr Karen Soons referred to her written report. The main item which she wished to draw attention to was the change to allow booking of Covid boosters before the 6 months plus a week time which must elapse following the second dose, so that vaccination could be done as soon as that date was reached.
- Borough Cllr Sara Mildmay-White referred to her written report, drawing attention to issues regarding climate, Christmas, and on-line learning about Resilience. The planning application DC/21/2142/CLE (item 12 on the Agenda) was discussed at this point. It was agreed that in fact the applicant did meet the requirements of the agricultural occupancy condition, although their own statement indicated that they did not. Discussion about the reason for making the application at this point in time, and the implications for future occupancy of the property if the agricultural

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occupancy condition was removed. Borough Cllr Sara Mildmay-White agreed to look into the matter further and revert to the Clerk.

Subsequent to the meeting Cllr Sara Mildmay-White reverted to the Clerk with the following information:-

“Following on from the discussion around the Woodhouse Farm planning application, unless the PC or anyone has evidence to dispute the claim that they have occupied the house for the last 10 years, it would appear that there is little that can be done re: the certificate of lawfulness use. Thus, as they claim, they have been in breach of the occupancy condition but after 10 years the certificate will automatically be granted and the agricultural occupancy restriction will fall away. The council had no reason to check up on the compliance of the original decision and it is so far off the beaten track, it means that the applicants have managed to keep their heads down”

PC has no evidence contrary to what the Applicant is stating about occupancy and no evidence has been forthcoming to the PC from anyone in the village.

6. Public Forum:

Two members of the public attended the meeting.

There was a discussion about the proposal that the PC assume responsibility for maintenance of ditches, gullies etc. It was noted that Simon Curl is an employee of the Highways Agency. All present felt strongly that this maintenance is paid for by all in their Council Tax, and should not be made a duty of the Parish. Significant safety concerns were raised about training, PPE and signage.

Councillors were informed that there is a long-standing Network Management Plan (a national standard) covering regular inspections and including, in particular, annual maintenance of gullies. It was agreed that this had not been the case for many years. County Cllr Karen Soons encouraged all to report issues via the portal and to also inform her of areas of concern. It was agreed that a formal decision and response to Simon Curl regarding this proposal required all Councillors, and was therefore deferred to the next meeting.

7. Correspondence: (all correspondence has been forwarded to Cllrs ahead of the meeting).

- (i) Email dated 7 September 2021 from Cllr Andy Drummond at West Suffolk Council who is the Portfolio Holder for Regulatory and Environment, regarding Tree Wardens and tree planting.

Cllr Partridge stated that her husband was very interested in the role of Tree Warden. Cllr Duchesne indicated that he and a neighbour would like to take up the offer of tree planting on private land. Clerk to obtain more information about these matters.

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8. Clerk's report:

(i) Schedule of items awaiting payment:

N Sturgeon	clerk's salary	423.54	chq451	LGA1972
	Information Commissioner (annual fee)	40.00	chq452	LGA1972
N Sturgeon	Repay of webhosting fee*	60.00	chq453	LGA1972
Business Services at CAS	PC Insurance	162.40	chq454	LGA1972

* annual website hosting renewal through One Suffolk who do not accept cheque payment directly, and therefore Clerk paid the fee and is claiming back from the Parish Council.

All Cllrs present approved the payment.

(ii) Schedule of Income and Expenditure for the period 01/04/21 to 09/11/21

INCOME:

Precept: 2660.00

EXPENDITURE:

N Smith	salary	chq443	311.10
SALC	annual subscription fee	chq444	143.87
PCC	grass cutting	chq445	120.00
A Spall	grass cutting	chq446	200.00
M Morley	grass cutting	chq447	100.00
N Smith	salary	chq448	259.25
PCC	hire of church for meetings	chq449	17.50
N Smith	salary	chq450	228.06
N Sturgeon	salary	chq451	423.54
ICO	annual Info Commissioner fee	chq452	40.00
N Sturgeon	reimbursement of CAS webhosting	chq453	60.00

			1903.32

Cllrs present considered and approved the Schedule.

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9. To consider and approve draft Precept for 2022-2023

Cllrs considered the draft Precept prepared by the Clerk, together with the breakdown of projected/proposed financial commitments for the period 2022-2023 Precept. The proposed Precept was in the sum of £3148. This was compared to the 2021-2022 Precept which was in the sum of £2660. £400 of the £488 increase from the 2021-2022 to the 2022-2023 Precept was an increase in the Clerk's hours from 3 hours per week to 3.5 hours per week, which was still 0.5 hours per week less than the recommended 4 hours per week from SALC.

All Cllrs present agreed and approved the draft Precept for 2022-2023.
Clerk will submit to West Suffolk Council ahead of the January 2022 submission date.

10. To consider and approve meeting dates for 2022

Cllrs agreed the following meeting dates for 2022:

8th February – PC Meeting;
10th May – Annual Parish Meeting/Assembly followed by Annual Parish Council Meeting;
12th July;
9th August – PC Meeting;
8th November – PC Meeting.

11. Cllrs reports/updates (if any available)

Cllr Duchesne noted that pneumatic traffic sensors had been present near Pitchers Green Farm, and asked if anyone knew who had initiated this, perhaps in relation to the planning application. Parishioner informed Cllrs that this would likely have been done by a private company, but would have required Highways consent. The PC are not notified of such applications. *Action – Clerk to enquire of Highways regarding the source of and justification for the application.*

12. Planning

Application DC/21/2142/CLE – Application for lawful development certificate for proposed or existing use – occupation of Woodhouse Farm in breach of agricultural occupancy condition. Woodhouse Farm, Woodhouse Farmhouse, Access Road to Woodhouse Farm, Felsham, IP30 0HP.

Please see item 5 above.

13. Date of next meeting: 8th February 2022 at 7pm in the Village Hall, unless otherwise stated on the Agenda, and in line with any current covid restriction at the time of the meeting.

Meeting closed: 8.46pm