

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in The Old School Community Centre at 7.00 p.m.  
on Thursday 15 March 2012**

Present: Cllrs. Keith Haisman (Chair), Derek Blake, Phil Gryce, Gayle Mallows, Keith Mison Alan Parsley and Leslie  
Warmington  
Clerk, Claire Ebeling  
Borough Cllr. Alaric Pugh, PC Rob Sippett

**1 Apologies for absence** – County Cllr. Jane Midwood, Cllr. Margaret Godwin and Cllr. Peter Phillips

**2 Register of members' interest** – None

*Section of the meeting open to the public:*

**3 Police report** – Report circulated. See attachment to the minutes.  
Rob Sippitt introduced himself as the new PC for Clare. PC Sippitt reported an increase in touting, particularly for scrap metal and explained that there is a means for the public to report suspicious vehicles – in a non-emergency, the public should call 101 with the details of the vehicle. It was suggested that this advice be put on the notice board – this will be provided by the area Crime Prevention Officer.

**4 Parishioners' question time** – No questions.

**5 County Councillor's Report** – Report circulated. See attachment to the minutes.

**6 Borough Councillor's Report** – Report circulated. See attachment to the minutes.

*End of public section of meeting*

**7 To approve minutes of previous meeting held on 16 February 2012**  
The minutes were approved unanimously.

**8 To receive an update on actions from the last meeting**  
Clerk confirmed that the actions have been completed.

**9 Clerk's Report** – See attachment to the minutes.

**10 Finance**  
Cllr Blake presented the monthly accounts and cash flow report. Proposed by Cllr Blake, seconded by Cllr Mallows and approved unanimously.

**11 Correspondence** - see attachment to minutes.

**12 Committee Reports - for decisions required**

- a) Environment Committee – minutes of 29 February 2012 were circulated.
- b) Emergency Planning Committee – No meeting took place.
- c) Communications Committee – minutes of 28 February 2012 were circulated.  
Cllr. Gryce recommended that an attempt be made to increase awareness of the Better Broadband for Suffolk campaign. The Clerk confirmed that details are on the website. Cllr. Gryce will provide a poster for the notice boards.

- d) Finance Committee – Minutes of 6 March were circulated. Cllr. Blake proposed that a debit card be obtained for the Clerk to use for online purchases. The Chair of Finance will have access to check transactions and for audit purposes, there should be emails from two authorised signatories before any purchases are made using the card. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Haisman and agreed unanimously.

The Finance Committee have reviewed the costs of Broadband in the Old School and requested that the Clerk investigate a single Broadband account to reduce the costs.

Cllr. Blake proposed maximising the interest received on money in the Parish Council account by investing £100k for 12 months and £50k for 6 months. This was seconded by Cllr. Gryce and agreed unanimously.

Cllr. Blake confirmed that the Loss Adjusters have agreed the insurance claim figure for the Cemetery chapel. Suffolk Acre will review the claim to establish why it took 23 months to be finalised.

Cllr. Mison proposed that all those involved in ensuring this claim reached a successful conclusion be formally thanked. It was agreed unanimously that Sharon Benson and Cllr. Blake in particular be thanked.

- e) Highways Committee – minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2012 were circulated.

### 13 Planning

- a) SE/12/0255/HH – Erection of single storey front extension and vehicle parking - No objections were received.

- b) **Applications received by the Clerk between publishing the agenda and this meeting**  
SE/12/0264/HH - 3 Hermitage Meadow, Clare - Erection of detached garden room - No objections were received.

- c) **To consider applying for dispensation in relation to the BT Wind Farm plans.**

It was agreed that each Councillor will make a decision as to whether they feel they should apply for dispensation and complete the application form accordingly.

### 14 To receive reports – by exception

- i) **Clare Country Park** – A report had been received from the Working party.

Cllr. Gryce reported that a meeting had taken place with Keith Mison, Environment Agency officers (David Smith, Stour team leader + 3 others) and Suffolk County Council (Patrick Scrivens, Footpaths & Rights of Way Officer). Repairs were discussed to rectify the erosion of the riverbank and the effect on the footpaths.

- ii) **4 Year Plan** - Cllr. Mallows reported that this will be finalised very shortly and circulated together with the next Chevron.

- iii) **Annual Parish Meeting**

The March Chevron and the Country Park update will be delivered to parishioners shortly.

The Clerk will contact Melanie to request the minutes from last year's APM.

The Annual Parish Report will be printed as an 8 page A5 report and will be delivered to all households.

The Clerk will check lead times for printing so that deadlines can be diarised.

It was agreed that Suffolk County Council Representatives Judy Terry, Sue Roper, Jerry Hindle, and Damien Parker and Neil Anthony from SEBC would be invited as guests.

- iv) **Diamond Jubilee arrangements**

Cllr. Gryce reported that arrangements for the Diamond Jubilee have been made and will provide a poster to communicate the events scheduled.

Cllr. Mison reported that 100 trees (plus a large Royal Oak) have been received to commemorate the Jubilee and a working party is required to plant them.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

**15 To discuss the option of becoming a Town Council**

See attachment to the minutes. Cllr. Warmington proposed that Clare Parish Council be known as Clare Town Council. Cllr. Parsley seconded and it was agreed unanimously. It was also agreed that the Chair will not be known as Mayor.

**16 To review the internal audit:**

**i) To discuss and agree the Interim Internal Audit Report of 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

The report was reviewed and Cllr. Haisman proposed it be accepted. Seconded by Cllr. Blake and agreed unanimously.

**ii) To review the effectiveness of the internal audit**

The review was completed and agreed unanimously.

**17 Risk assessment**

Cllr. Blake reported on the review and updated actions and proposed the risk assessment and 2012/13 Action Plan be accepted. Agreed unanimously.

The Sub-Committees will be asked to review the full risk assessment document in relation to their remit.

**Clerk/Sub-Committees**

**18 To discuss a meeting with the Planning Consultant regarding the Granary development (section 106)**

It was agreed that a private meeting take place as there may be some financial discussion.

**19 To agree a response to the consultation document Vision 2031**

The document was circulated and a Working Group will work on the Parish Council response to be reviewed at the next meeting.

**20 To nominate CHOC Trustees**

Olive Smith and Rosemary Warmington are happy to continue as CHOC Trustees. The Clerk will check that Cllr. Phillips is also happy to remain a Trustee. If Cllr. Phillips is happy to continue, the nominations are confirmed. The Clerk will email CHOC accordingly.

**Clerk**

**21 Items for the next Chevron**

Cllr. Mallows confirmed the items for the next Chevron. The Diamond Jubilee should be the focus.

**Cllr Mallows**

**22 To receive agenda items for next meeting**

- To discuss elections
- To agree the Annual Parish Meeting and Report

The meeting closed at 9.26pm

## Attachment to minutes – Item 3, Police Report:

The following local report was presented:

### Countywide issues

#### Performance & Public confidence

- **Suffolk is a very safe county. Crime levels, based on our end of year figures (2010/2011), show that crime levels have reduced for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in succession, meaning levels are at their lowest for a decade.**
- **National Confidence Measure** - British Crime Survey figures show that to December 2010, 54% of people believe that the police and local councils are dealing with the crime and ASB issues that matter in their area, putting Suffolk at 10<sup>th</sup> nationally for this measure of confidence.
- 92.3% of people feel safe where they live, the highest level for over two years (*rolling 12 months to March 2011*)
- 70.3% of people think we are tackling the things that matter in their community. This is the highest level for 2 years.
- End of year figures show that ASB is down 8% overall, with rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour down 10%. This equates to over 2000 less incidents of rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour.
- We have attended over 90% of emergency calls with our 15-minute target time, which is a quicker target time than the national target of 20 minutes.

#### Finance

- Suffolk is a low cost force, but in line with police forces across the county, we are facing an unprecedented financial situation. We are facing a cut in funding of approximately £13.5 million over the next four years, based on current estimates.
- In order to deliver the financial savings required, the STEP (Strategic Transformation and Efficiency Programme) has been created to examine all aspects of how we deliver service, reducing unnecessary bureaucracy and improving value for money.
- The Constabulary is operating a recruitment freeze for both officers and staff, and the Business Support Review is in the implementation phase of creating shared support units with Norfolk Constabulary. This will provide collaborative support to our frontline services, achieving savings of an estimated £9.8million over 4 years.
- We are looking at new ways of delivering our local policing, constructing a new model that protects frontline policing, suits local demand and reduces supervisory and management roles.
- Our funding comes from two sources; government grant and council tax precept – Suffolk Police Authority froze this year's council tax at last year's levels in recognition of the economic pressures facing Suffolk residents.

#### Priorities

- Our latest Three-Year Plan has been published, which has moved away from national targets and focuses on what matters to Suffolk, this is available to view at [www.suffolkpoliceauthority.org.uk](http://www.suffolkpoliceauthority.org.uk).
- The top priorities identified through our consultation with communities are violence in public, drugs, house burglary, robbery, speeding and ASB. These have been worked into our priorities for the coming year and dedicated work will be undertaken to address these issues.
- Following consultation with our communities and an assessment of operational and organisational risks, the priorities for the constabulary for the next three years are to aim to:
  - Reduce crime and ASB
  - Improve the satisfaction of those that use our services and the confidence of the public in policing
  - Sustain the financial stability of Suffolk Police

#### Estates

- The Police Authority is working closely with our local councils and other agencies to explore ways in which we can use our properties and estate more effectively and efficiently. For example, it has purchased premises with Suffolk County Council, which will allow ageing properties in need of multi-million pound refurbishment to be sold off.
- An initiative called the 'Single Public Sector Estate' (SPSE) has been launched involving many parts of the public sector across Suffolk. The vision for the SPSE is to create an estate that supports the whole of the public sector, where staff from any public or partner organisation can work. The group are now looking at areas around the county so see where we can work collaboratively in respect of property needs.
- Ongoing projects include placing Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) offices in fire stations, council offices and schools. Framlingham SNT now shares premises with Framlingham Fire Service, and other SNTs around the county are being considered for this kind of collaboration

#### Police and Crime Commissioners

- The coalition Government intends to introduce directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to replace Police Authorities.
- Members of the public will directly vote for an individual to represent their community's policing needs, and the first elections are due to take place in May 2012.
- PCCs will be in place to ensure that police forces work to deliver value for money and that they are meeting local policing priorities.

## Local Issues and Actions

Since the last meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2012 there have been 8 crimes of note:

A car windscreen was damaged outside the Red House B&B on Nethergate Street, a shop window was damaged on the High Street and several laptops were stolen from a shop on Market Hill. There have been several burglaries and attempted burglaries from outbuildings at the allotments where items have been stolen.

In other areas there have also been similar burglaries, in particular Ousden and Wickhambrook and we are still keen to be informed of any suspicious vehicles seen driving around the villages. Please remember to call 101 to report anything that you feel is suspicious and/or notify your Neighbourhood Watch contacts.

The Priority Tasking Meeting will have been held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March and as at this point, we are unable to notify you as to what the new priorities will be.

### Local meetings

St Edmundsbury Rural South Safer Neighbourhood Team has set up a public meeting to help decide priorities for the team and its partners to tackle in the local area.

These public meetings take place on a three monthly basis. Concerns will be fed back to the Safer Neighbourhood Team and partner agencies, which will look to provide solutions.

DATE: TBA  
TIME: TBA  
PLACE: TBA

We really need your input as members of the community and the voice of Parish councils - please come along or send someone to represent you.

## **Attachment to minutes – Item 5, County Councillor’s Report**

### **Bus services**

I met the Traffic Commissioner in February but I have to report that the meeting was pretty disappointing. It seems that his responsibility (he covers an area of 7 counties) is solely to do with ensuring that bus companies comply with financial criteria before he will grant them a licence. Routes are not his responsibility but punctuality and reliability can be – if there are enough complaints about a particular service. It seems he can do nothing about “phoenix” companies – those which go bust and resurrect themselves under a different name.

### **Broadband**

I would like to urge everyone who is interested to sign up to the “Better Broadband for Suffolk” campaign. Forms are available in libraries and on the internet – [broadband@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:broadband@suffolk.gov.uk)

### **Diamond Jubilee**

Many villages are interested in purchasing mugs to give to the children and I can send details of mugs sourced by SCC to your clerk. I am able to fund Jubilee related things with my Locality Budget. Anything except food and drink is acceptable and I have been asked for sums in the region of £400 - £500. Mobile loos are the most unusual Jubilee request so far!

### **Safer Neighbourhood Tasking Meeting**

Writing this on Wednesday evening I am shortly to go to the SNT meeting in Chevington. I will be asking our officers for an update on who’s who locally since there have been a number of changes recently and I do not believe that the public are aware.

### **Neighbourhood Watch**

Bob Steel our Safer Neighbourhoods Coordinator from Hundon is still recruiting local “eyes and ears” for his email “tree” and has been getting some good results – [ruralsouthwatch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ruralsouthwatch@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Stour Valley Community School**

I was delighted to see a report from the Headteacher in the March/April Wickhambrook Scene village magazine and to hear of closer links with Wickhambrook Primary School at the Governors meeting last Monday.

### **Jane Midwood**

## Attachment to minutes – Item 6, Borough Councillor's report

### Period: 14th February - 15th March 2012 Author: Councillor Alaric Pugh

I am delighted to have been elected to represent Clare and work hard to do my best to uphold the interests of the town at St Edmundsbury Borough Council. The committees I sit on are: Development Control, Rural Working Party, Sustainable Development Working Party, New Tenancies Working Party and am a substitute on Performance and Audit. I attend Dedham and Stour Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Project and Clare Country Park Steering Group Meetings.

I expect to be in attendance at Parish Council meetings and will be happy to answer any questions from councillors or parishioners after my report. I am happy to run a surgery at a mutually convenient time with parishioners whose questions cannot be addressed at the Parish Council Meeting. My mobile phone number is: 07930460899 and email [alaric.pugh@stedsb.gov.uk](mailto:alaric.pugh@stedsb.gov.uk)

#### 1. Training undertaken since last report

- Finance
- Planning

#### 2. Conferences/Exhibitions attended

- Gypsies and Travellers
- Better Broadband for Suffolk

#### 3. Civic events etc

- None

#### 4. Meetings attended (excluding Majority Group meetings)

- Presentations by prospective candidates for joint Chief Executive of St Eds and Forest Heath
- Meetings re Clare Country Park
- Development Control
- Full Council
- Sustainable Development
- Overview and Scrutiny
- Vision 2031
- Rural Working Party
- Safer Neighbourhood Team (Police)

#### 5. Forthcoming meetings before next PC Meeting

- Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project
- Development Control

#### 6. Voting record - items with significance to Clare community

- I voted in support of the Suffolk Police's request for a visually intrusive 30 metre radio mast in Bury St Edmunds
- I voted in support of deferring the Canham's Farm wind test mast for a site visit
- I voted to approve a balanced annual Borough Budget that shows no increase in Council Tax
- I voted to appoint a new joint Chief Executive
- I voted to appoint a new mayor

#### 7. Current Clare issues involvement/resident requests to take forward

- I am investigating a yellow skip in a conservation area, dog mess, and nuisance dog barking. I continue to research avenues for funding for Rural Economic Development and will happily assist any residents with business planning where I can
- I am still trying to set up a business education meeting later in the year at SVCS
- I remain closely involved with the Clare Country Park resolution process

Last but not least I would like to highlight the fact that St Edmundsbury will, once again, NOT be increasing Council Tax.



## Attachment to minutes – Item 9, Clerk’s Report – March 2012

### **Action:**

- Following a successful training session on Planning, I am awaiting responses as to who would like to attend the Development Control Training for Parish & Town Councillors run by St Eds on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> at 5.30 at West Suffolk House, Bury St Edmunds. Cllrs. Haisman and Blake will be attending the SALC Neighbourhood Planning session on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Noting:**

- The Pashler’s Alley notice board has been re-backed and tidied up and looks great – thank you Gayle and her husband!
- Tenders are coming in for grass cutting for 2012-14.

### **Reported issues**

#### **Newly reported issues**

- None

#### **Update on previously reported issues**

- UK Power Networks have put a new electricity pole in place in Bridewell Street. Unfortunately BT did not carry out their part of the work. BT has confirmed that they will complete the work within the next few weeks. UK Power Networks will chase them and inform me when the work is complete.

### **Borough planning decisions:**

- SE/11/1543, 15 Westfield, Clare, Replace flat roof – APPROVED
- SE/11/1545, 16 Westfield, Clare, Replace flat roof – APPROVED
- SE/11/1437, Low Vale, Stoke Road, Clare, retention of pole mounted floodlights surrounding ménage - APPROVED



**Attachment to minutes – Item 11, Correspondence:**

**Items for action**  
(all circulated to Parish Councillors)

WI stall on Market Hill	The Clare WI has requested permission to have a cake stall on the Market Hill on 16 <sup>th</sup> June between 9am and 1pm to raise funds for Clare Christmas Lights. <b>APPROVED</b>
Cemetery approval	Request for burial of ashes and name and dates to be added to gravestone. <b>APPROVED</b>
Footpath 14	Mr Jennings has written twice since the last meeting requesting the support of the Parish Council. <b>Action: write letter of support for the extension of the footpath, cc. Cllr. Midwood and Hundon Parish Council</b>
SE/10/0260 – Old Waterworks, The Common, Clare	A parishioner is concerned about work to the track running alongside Sheepgate Lane (for vehicular access?) and would like assurance that the development requested in 2010 will not be allowed. (St Eds Planning website gives no information). <b>Action: Respond to advise that the landowner has right of access. He has obtained authorisation from Highways to put hardcore down for easier access to his land.</b>

**Items for noting**  
(copies available from the Clerk on request)

Road Closure	Ashen road will be closed for work to be carried out on the bridge. Scheduled for Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> March 9am-5pm.
War Memorial	The grant has been approved and English Heritage confirmed that it had been passed for payment on 27 February.
Neighbourhood Watch	Inspector Ferrie responded to my email requesting a focus on Neighbourhood Watch-type schemes. He confirmed that PCSO Chris Shields will take the lead in Neighbourhood Watch matters when he joins the Clare team next week.

### Notes regarding Item 15 on Agenda for PC meeting Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Clare is a unique settlement. It is the only community in the country which has a park with a Castle and a Railway Station within its boundary. It has an ancient Market Charter as a Town and was the centre of the old Clare Rural District Council. It is a Key Service Centre and has most (if not all) of the features of any larger town. We have two schools, a Town Hall, Community Centre, Supermarket, Pharmacy, Toy Shop, Ironmonger, Newsagent, Post Office, Greengrocer, Estate Agents, Industrial Estate, Bookshop, Hairdressers and Barbers, Hotels and Boarding Houses, Antique Shops, Churches, Gift Shops etc, etc

The usual hierarchy of settlements goes City, Town, Village, Hamlet but there is no rule about size. Indeed the smallest city in England is Wells in Somerset having a population of 11,000 or so is smaller than both Haverhill and Sudbury. Likewise some of the villages in England have over 10,000 people.

Some of the Advantages will include Perceived Status and could put us on a level footing with other towns. There may be a perception that we are able to accomplish far more with this level of acceptance whereas some may think of it as being pretentious or “thinking big”. Is there anything wrong with “Thinking Big”?

A Town does not need to have a Mayor with all the accoutrements but simply maintain the usual offices. Other small communities have taken this step.

### This is the extract from the “Local Councillor” published by SALC

Carlton Colville Parish Council has changed to **Carlton Colville Town Council**. This makes it the 22th Town Council in Suffolk. Chairman of the Town Council, Terry Fleet expects the change in status to give the council a higher profile and more opportunities to leverage in funding. Shona Bendix, SALC CEO welcomed the change as a good thing for the townsfolk of Carlton Colville reflecting how they felt about themselves and their aspirations for the future.

The reasons given by parish councils for considering changing to town councils include:

- To more accurately reflect the nature and aspirations of their community.
- To more accurately reflect the capacity, workload and aspirations of the council.
- To confer perceived status in order that other tiers of local government take the council and community seriously.

The largest electorate by far served by a local council is Bury St Edmunds with 30,751 with Haverhill the next with an electorate of 19,045. The smallest Town Council electorate is Southwold with 1,009 whilst Carlton Colville has an electorate of 6,200. Now there are only two councils with electorates over 6,000 which are not town councils – Mildenhall and Great Cornard. Town councils are parish councils that have resolved to call themselves town councils and so become entitled in law to elect a chairman who they can call a mayor. Other than the power to elect a mayor, town councils do not have any additional powers than a parish council.