

Milden Parish Meeting – Tuesday 25th November 2014

Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 25th November 2014 in Milden Pavilion at 7pm

Chairman: Angus Cundey
Treasurer: Sandy De'Ath
Clerk: Sara Godfrey

Present: James Finch, Myranda Cundey, Dick Histed, Stephen Morley, Christopher Hawkins, Joy Morley, Justine Turner, Jan Ditheridge, Julie Isahak, John Fulcher, Amanda Fulcher, Sally Miles, Tissa Rigby, Pearl Gee, Anne McLintic, Kevin Warren, Anne Warren, Deborah Kerr, Denise Thomas, Bridget Hawkins

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Apologies for absence

were received from Bryn Hurren, Tony Ditheridge, Adrian Miles, John Rigby, Joe Coulter, Jo Eggsby and Michael Hawkins

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28th May 2014

The minutes had been distributed before the meeting. These were accepted as an accurate record of that meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

Proposed: Joy Morley Seconded: Stephen Morley

3. Matters arising from those minutes.

The chairman extended a warm welcome to Sandy De'Ath as our new Treasurer and thanked her on behalf of everyone for taking on the role.

The Chairman reported that there had been no progress on utilising the phone box. Ideas still on the table include a mini-library or a noticeboard. It was felt that it would be too damp for the former and unlikely that anyone would go inside to look at the latter. Further ideas were encouraged.

With regard to replacing the village noticeboard with a larger one, Jan Ditheridge agreed to follow up on Tony Ditheridge's offer at the last meeting to obtain a quote from his carpenter. Rough measurements were proposed.

4. Parish Liaison Officer's Report.

No report as no officer attended.

Recent burglaries from sheds and outbuildings in nearby villages were highlighted. Stephen Morley raised the problem of a truck and trailer that habitually parked in Water Street in Lavenham causing an obstruction. On one occasion a farm lorry was unable to pass and had to execute a dangerous reversing manoeuvre onto the High Street. Sara Godfrey agreed to report this to the police (*reported 27/11/14*)

5. County Councillor's Report.

Councillor Finch presented his report to the meeting, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. In addition to the subjects noted therein there was discussion of Highways issues. Joy Morley pointed out that the unmade area of road outside the church remains unrepaired despite Councillor Finch's attempts to expedite the matter at the last Parish Meeting. Councillor Finch reminded parishioners that the best way to report any issue with

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the Highways is by using the SCC online reporting website. Sara Godfrey undertook to report this defect on behalf of Joy Morley using the online facility (*reported 27/11/14*). Councillor Finch went on to say that it had been a difficult time at Highways, but that on a positive note much of the backlog of repairs had been cleared and that a new piece of equipment that repairs potholes in one pass had been acquired. This machine can repair up to 150 potholes per day.

Denise Thomas asked whether there was anything Councillor Finch could do to improve our mobile phone signal. He replied that the council was looking into siting masts on County Farm's land (not relevant to Milden) and the council would also continue to lobby the operators to share masts.

The chairman extended the meeting's thanks to Councillor Finch for his interesting and informative report.

6. District Councillor's Report

Councillor Hurren extended his sincere apologies to the meeting as he was unable to attend. This was the first meeting in nearly 12 years as District Councillor that he had missed.

Councillor Hurren had sent a written report to the meeting that was read out by Sara Godfrey. The text is as follows: -

"The two main items to report are the ever decreasing support grants we get from the government, the local government grant is due to be phased out in another four years and we will have to make yet more savings, our budget gap at the moment is one and a quarter million and we will make it up by more joint working with mid Suffolk, more staff savings and relying more on the new homes bonus to supplement our capital projects. We are being driven towards more growth and self sufficiency and it is certainly turning out that way.

The second item to report is the decision on where we work from. Due to our decreasing staff both Babergh and Mid Suffolk have an under occupied H.Q. which is expensive to run and maintain so we are looking at either a purpose built building or an office share maybe with another council, either of these options would need some satellite offices in our market towns so I am not quite sure yet how much money would be saved. I also have a view as your councillor that any H.Q. should be within our council area and not outside. This debate is due to run for several months yet so I will report at your spring meeting.

The local matter that is off some concern to you is the proposed development at Pound Farm, this will be turned down as the existing buildings are not of good enough quality to be converted, it would necessitate a total rebuild which is against policy as it would be new houses in the countryside which is against our policy and I do not think that what was proposed would have sat well on that corner anyway. I have as always Angus enquired about a more fitting development on that site but the answer is always no as Milden is an unsustainable village.

You also have an application in for a small cattery in Powney street which the council is likely to support as it is not being deemed as intrusive or harmful to neighbours and it seems that there is a building there already. Please let me know if you think otherwise."

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Anne Warren presented plans and photographs of the proposed cattery at April Cottage. This building will replace one already there and is proposed to accommodate 15-20 cats on a short stay basis. The building will sit on the boundary with Milden Cottage. Amanda and John Fulcher had some concerns about possible expansion in the future, particularly with regard to facilities for dogs. Anne Warren assured them this was not the plan. The Chairman requested that the Fulchers revert to him by the end of the week with their comments so that a response could be provided to the council in a timely manner.

7. Finance Report

The Treasurer gave the financial report for November 2014

The current bank balance is £809 of which approximately £400 is committed to paying one quarterly water bill and half the grass cutting cost for the playing fields. This will leave us with about £400 to carry over to next financial year which is slightly less than the carry-over from last year of £479.

Our basic expenditure for the year before any major repairs or purchases is around £870.

The Precept from Babergh District Council was £881 plus £18 grant making the total £900

The accounts were accepted by the meeting, proposed by Tissa Rigby and seconded by Myranda Cundey.

There was a unanimous showing of hands to increase the precept by 2%

Electrical PAT.

There were no problems with any of the electrical appliances within the Pavilion and these have all passed their test. It seems we only have to do this testing once every two years because of the low usage of the Pavilion. Members of the Pavilion committee agreed to see if it was possible for the Pavilion committee to assume responsibility for PAT testing given that they use the appliances.

Annual Audit.

The annual audit was completed and returned. There were no matters arising from the auditors.

The Chairman and Treasurer signed off on the Risk Assessment for bank overdrawal and liability for persons and property, for which we have insurance.

8. Pavilion/Recreation Ground.

In Adrian Miles' absence Justine Turner gave the Pavilion report. Pavilion funds are healthy with £5202 in the bank. A new sign has been bought and there are plans to give the cricket club financial assistance and purchase new cutlery and crockery. The cricket team are doing well and finished 5th in the League. There are already good bookings for cricket next year, but other bookings (through Pearl) need to be encouraged.

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The Milden Singers “Hits from the Blitz” concerts last weekend were a sell out and very much enjoyed by all who were lucky enough to get a ticket. The concerts raised over £1300 for the Pavilion. The Chairman remarked that it was a “splendid event” and extended thanks to Pearl for her fantastic work in bringing the event together. It was generally agreed that Milden was a “jolly good little village”.

Denise Thomas extended her thanks to both Justine Turner and Joy Morley for their work with the pavilion and in the village generally and this support was echoed by all present.

9. Pound Farm Planning Application

The meeting was shown plans and representation of the proposed development of three houses developed from the existing farm buildings. As has been noted earlier in these minutes the District Council will reject these plans.

There followed a lengthy discussion about what should be done with the site with views ranging from “nothing at all” to a development of smaller properties, possibly social housing (although there is no demonstrable need currently). In the absence of Councillor Hurren it was difficult to progress the discussion. It was agreed however that the Chairman would seek to have a meeting with the relevant planning officer at Babergh. It would be desirable for the village to try and reach a consensus over the future of the site, which some regard as an eyesore.

10. Village Plan

The Chairman introduced the subject of a Village Plan. He felt that if Milden had an agreed Village Plan then we would be in a better position to deal with potential developers and Babergh in the event of a proposed development. This is tied in with the Pound Farm Planning issue and it was agreed that the Chairman would seek to have a meeting with the Planning Department at Babergh to discuss the issues. It was generally agreed that it would be useful to invite the Planning Officer to a specially convened Parish Meeting so that parishioners can share their views on Pound Farm and wider development issues in the village.

11. Milden Road Safety Campaign

Justine Turner reported on the Milden road safety campaign. Laminated “Think 30” signs had been placed at various points along the 30mph section through Powney Street. These had now been in place for a few months and the general feeling was that they had had a positive impact on reducing speed. There is always more that can be done as some individuals persist in speeding and there was a general discussion of the options eg hiring of a speed sign when funds allow.

The Chairman thanked Justine Turner for her hard work in getting this organised for the village.

At the last meeting Councillor Finch was going to ask the Highways department to conduct a traffic survey of Milden. He is going to follow up on this.

Joy Morley reported that the white painted lines at the entrance to the village next to the 30mph signs were very worn. Sara Godfrey will report this via the website (reported 27/11/2014)

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12. Correspondence

There was no correspondence

13. Any Other Business.

Tissa Rigby expressed her thanks on behalf of the Royal British Legion, £166.15 had been collected for the Poppy Appeal this year, which was more than last year.

John Fulcher requested permission to cut off a low hanging branch from a lime tree next to his house. No one objected.

Justine Turner requested that the bin next to the phone box be emptied. Sara Godfrey agreed to look into how we go about this as Nick Elliot (previous clerk) had dealt with it in the past. (*Request sent to Babergh 27/11/14*)

Sara Godfrey raised the issue of the state of the footpaths, particularly the footpath adjacent to Hays Farm and also Pound Lane. These have become very overgrown and narrow. As they are also bridleways, the horses have churned up the surface and the paths have become dangerous for walkers. James Finch provided contact details for the relevant individuals at SCC and Sara Godfrey will email them.

A group in Monks Eleigh, called Save Monks Eleigh School are proposing to use the old school building as a community education centre. Sara Godfrey had sent out by email a questionnaire that the group have put together. Responses by 5th December please. She also told the meeting that there was a brainstorming session at Monks Eleigh Village Hall on Wednesday 26th November at 7pm and all were welcome.

The next meeting will be in May 2015, a date will be advised in due course.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.55p.m.

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James Finch - County Councillor - Summary Report

_ New team to safeguard Suffolk people

Organisations responsible for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children in Suffolk are to form a new, single, team. This will make sure information needed to keep people safe is held, and immediately accessible, in one place. The organisations, including SCC, the police, health services, district and borough council housing services, education, Probation and the Youth Offending Service, have come together to create Suffolk's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The MASH is being implemented in stages to make sure that the high standards of safeguarding already in place in Suffolk don't suffer during the transition from current arrangements. Once fully operational, the MASH will be made up of approximately 60 professionals from across the county. The majority of these staff will be located at Landmark House in Ipswich. Members of the public who are concerned that a child, young person or adult is at risk of abuse, harm or neglect, should still contact Customer First on 0808 800 4005 (free from landlines and most mobiles). Further information about the Suffolk MASH is available at www.suffolk.gov.uk/MASH. Can you support and inspire a teenager through fostering?

_ New rail minister attends Suffolk Rail Conference

The new rail minister, Claire Perry MP, was in town today, to hear about the need to improve rail services in Suffolk at a rail conference being hosted by Suffolk County Council. The 2014 Suffolk Rail Conference focused on the new long-term rail franchise and provided a forum for delegates to discuss Suffolk's rail priorities. In addition to calls for improved rail infrastructure, faster line speeds, better rolling stock and more frequent services on the Great Eastern Main Line into London Liverpool Street, key rail priorities for Suffolk include: an hourly Ipswich to Peterborough passenger service; a half-hourly Ipswich to Cambridge passenger service; a halfhourly Ipswich to Lowestoft passenger service; improvements to the Felixstowe branch line to allow more punctual and reliable passenger services; hourly Sunday passenger services; station improvements; and faster line speeds on local lines. Graham Newman, SCC's cabinet member for roads and transport, said: "We have organised this event at a crucial time for Suffolk, as the Department for Transport is starting the process to re-tender the new long-term rail franchise and Network Rail is developing its rail investment plans. We need to respond robustly to both organisations, and the Suffolk Rail Conference provides the perfect opportunity to raise the county's rail demands with key decision makers."

_ Success for first-ever Suffolk Skills Show

Suffolk businesses turned out in great numbers to support the first-ever Suffolk Skills Show; a skills and careers event reaching over 4,000 young people. The event set out to engage Suffolk's young people and provide an insight into the career opportunities available to them locally. The show, which took place at Trinity Park in Ipswich, targeted those aged between 11 and 24. The businesses exhibiting at the event worked hard to ensure those attending left with their eyes opened to the wide range of careers across Suffolk, some which they may never have considered. There were many interactive indoor and outdoor stands showcasing opportunities in energy, IT and technology, finance and business services, creative digital, agriculture, construction, motor vehicle, advanced manufacturing, ports and logistics as well as HM Forces and a 'have a go' area where attendees were able to try their hand at new skills. Those unable to make the event during the day were encouraged to come along for a drop in session in the evening to explore options available to them locally; giving them an opportunity

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to talk to employers, colleges, training providers and advisers about their future careers.

_ Suffolk’s blue-light partnership awarded nearly £5million in funding

A newly-awarded government grant will help increase the number of shared bases in Suffolk for fire, police and ambulance services. The grant of £4.94 million follows the submission of a joint-bid, led by SCC’s Fire and Rescue Service, earlier in the year to the Department of Communities and Local Government. As Colin Spence, SCC’s cabinet member for public protection, said: “Over the last two years, we have worked with our partners to create four shared fire and police stations which are located in Ixworth, Elmswell, Debenham and Framlingham. Ambulance crews are now based at fire stations in Lowestoft and Brandon. This national funding will support the co-location of our front-line blue-light services at further locations across Suffolk. Work will continue to establish the possibility of further shared blue-light bases across the county.” The national funding will be provided in 2015 to help establish more shared bases in Suffolk. The collaborative approach creates long-term financial savings for all parties and it will help the partners work more closely together in the community. The potential three-year programme could bring the number of blue-light shared fire stations to 12 out of a total of 35 Fire and Rescue Service buildings.

_ High-speed broadband for Suffolk gets another boost

SCC Cabinet this last week agreed to a new £10million contribution to phase two of the plan to secure high-speed broadband across Suffolk. In the first phase of the programme, high-speed broadband is expected to have reached 85% of homes and businesses by 2015, with the remainder being offered a minimum of 2 megabits per second (Mbps). However, with this new investment, matching the £10million coming from the national government agency Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), will ensure that the total proportion of premises receiving super-fast broadband speeds will reach at least 95% by the end of 2017. On 31st October Suffolk were the first county in the country to sign the procurement contract with BT for access to this second phase of funding. While reaching the final 5% will be more difficult, The County Council do not intend to stop until they have secured 100% coverage for the whole county.

_ Suffolk’s adoption week launched

The county’s adoption service has this last week launched a National Adoption Week in Suffolk; encouraging prospective adopters to come forward. This last week there was a focus on finding sibling groups, older children and disabled children their forever families. The six children currently waiting for a family all have additional needs and will require support for their future health and development - they are Suffolk’s priority and we seek your help in our communities.

My priorities for Suffolk

Education - Supporting Vulnerable People - Jobs and Growth
Localism and the Stour Valley - Building on Suffolk’s Strength –
all underpinned by strong financial management and low council tax
James Finch 24th November 2014

County Councillor Stour Valley Division

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