

Minutes of Bures St Mary Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 26th May 2016 at The Garrad Room, Bures Community Centre, Nayland Road at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs G Jackson, L Alston, D Ambrose, G Crowley
Cllr J Finch (SCC), Cllr L Parker (BDC), Cllr D Lee (BHPC)
plus 11 members of the public

In attendance: Mrs J Wright (Parish Clerk)

In the Chair: Cllr G Jackson (Bures St Mary Parish Council Chairman)

Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr J McCrory.

Minutes

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st May 2015 were read and confirmed (previously signed 23rd July 2015).

Chairman's Welcome and Report

Cllr Jackson welcomed everyone to the meeting and proceeded to present her report below which will be held on file.

This has been a year with some change on long standing issues for the parish council. Firstly, it has been agreed that major work will be carried out on The Croft. This does not mean it will be an adopted road but the sum available is sufficient to make a considerable difference to the surface. Secondly, Suffolk Highways have agreed that the appalling record of accidents on the B1508 between Bures and Sudbury warrants a speed limit of 40mph being introduced. There has been a complaint about this, which will cause a delay in the Road Traffic Order, but we hope both The Croft and the speed limit will be sorted before next winter. The third item, which has been on the agenda for many years, is Bank House. This listed property had been allowed to fall into disrepair and it seemed that no amount of concern raised made a difference. However, work on the exterior has taken place and Bridge Street looks all the better for this. We have been plagued by problems with dogs on the recreation ground. The majority of dog owners have been responsible and we are aware that some pick up after other people's dogs. We made the decision that there should be a clear demarcation between the areas available for human play and sport and those where dog owners may exercise their pets. There have been 'teething' problems in the full sense of the word. Shockingly, a dog owner not only allowed their dog off the lead in the playground area but also was unable to stop it from biting a responsible dog owner. Please help us to manage the use of the field by reminding dog owners who have their dogs off the lead in the play areas that they need to take their dog down near the riverbank or put it on a lead. The council continues to meet six times a year with members serving on the Sportsground Committee which also meets six times and The Cemetery Committee which meets quarterly. The council is represented on other bodies such as The Community Centre Committee and Suffolk Association of Local Councils and is a link with the trustees of Bures Common. There have been some changes in councillors this year. Sadly, Philip Arnold stood down at Christmas due to health problems. Joe Carpenter, Becky Butcher and Michaela Cudmore have stood down for personal reasons in recent weeks. I would like to thank all four councillors for their work for the council and to thank them for their continuing work for the community in other ways. It is testament to the vitality of the village that we have had new faces coming forward expressing interest in becoming councillors. Also heartening was the turn out for the litter pick which took place in rather inclement weather on a Saturday in March.

Our recreation ground is one of which to be proud. There are few villages of our size that have such excellent facilities. To take things to another level the Sportsground Committee has ordered an exciting new piece of climbing equipment for teenagers and adults. It has an app which can be used to compete against yourself or others. The smart new green fencing for play area is another of this year's achievements. I would like to thank our Babergh District Councillor, Lee Parker and our Suffolk County Councillor, James Finch for their work on our behalf and Bures St Mary Parish Council for putting my name forward for the Buckingham Palace Garden Party. It was an honour to attend as your chairman. Last, but certainly not least, thanks to our extremely hard working clerk, Jenny Wright.

Police Report

A police representative had been invited to attend but had been unable to owing to shift patterns. The Clerk had previously circulated a County Police update from PS Matt Paisley noting the recent changes and challenges currently being faced by Suffolk Constabulary. PCSO Laura Mansell had been assigned as Parish and Town Council Police Liaison Officer for the area and had met with the Clerk to introduce herself and explain her role. PCSO Mansell would also cover the Watch Schemes and Domestic Abuse. Danny Cooper, Locality Inspector for Haverhill and Sudbury had expressed his keenness for his team to engage with the local community as much as possible. The Suffolk Police website was currently being improved and increased information would be more readily available online.

County Councillor Report

Cllr Finch's report had been previously circulated to all members and would be held on file.

Cllr Finch proceeded to highlight the following main points:

SCC freezes General Council Tax for sixth year in a row.

Suffolk schools' ascent of league tables continues. Figures confirmed the trend of improvement with Suffolk climbing 18 places in the national league table for GCSE results from 125th to 107th.

Suffolk's Children Services inspection rated Good by Ofsted with Suffolk now sitting in the top 22% of local authorities in the country.

Suffolk's Better Broadband BDUK programme – work had been completed on the 1st contract of the broadband rollout. To date 35 cabinets enabled and 3,000 premises reached under the Superfast Extension Programme.

£1b Devolution Deal announced for East Anglia in the Budget on 16th March. As part of the deal East Anglia would receive: £900m (£30m a year for the next 30 years) to invest in infrastructure and £175m to invest in housing.

Cllr Finch then commented on 2 major parish issues:

The Croft resurfacing – the drainage survey completed. Detailed design in hand and the next phase was to formally inform all residents of the pending works. Resurfacing and drainage works due to be completed in September.

B1508 – the speed panel had approved the revisions to implement a 40mph restriction the full length from the 30mph at Bures St Mary to the 30mph at Little Cornard. One objection to the proposals had been received but it was hoped that the restrictions would be in place by the end of the year.

District Councillor Report

Cllr Parker introduced himself to all those present and gave a short verbal report on the following main points:

Revenue – there was a need for the District Council to focus on growth and for generating revenue. Councillors had looked into the current workings of the District Council with 5 key items identified

to follow up on – Housing Growth, Business Growth, Engaging with the Community, Greater Efficient Working, Making better use of Assets and Investments.

Cllr Parker advised that he was currently a member of the Planning Committee. He also noted that BDC was currently looking for a new C.E.O. and Vice C.E.O. An increase of 3% in the Council Tax for 2016/17 had been necessary.

Financial Statement

The Clerk presented the following report:

Balances as at 1st April 2016:

Business Instant A/C balance:	£16,321.38
Treasurers A/C balance:	<u>£ 8,186.81</u>
	£24,508.19

Parish precept to Babergh District Council for financial year 2016/2017: £26,435.00 as per previous year 2015/2016.

Council Tax Grant: £503.75 for 2016/17 additional to the Parish Precept request.

Previous year 2015/16: £1,007.50. The Council Tax Grant will continue to be reduced from BDC year on year until a Nil figure. Parish Council will continue to monitor the effect of this reduction on its budget.

Parish Element of Band D Tax Rate: £65.11 for 2016/17 (£66.16 for 2015/16)

Allocation of Parish Budget 2016/17:

Cemetery Authority	£3500 (as per previous year)
Bures Community Centre	£300 (50% of telephone line rental)
Sportsground	£8,000 (as per previous year)
Repairs/Projects	£2,000
Lighting	£1,000
Lighting Loan	£1,749.92
Insurance	£480
Training	£500
Hall hire	£200
Auditors	£300
Administration	£400
Subscriptions	£400
Clerk's salary	£4,400
Repairs/projects	£2,000
Grounds Maintenance	£2,750 (increased to reflect costs for street cleansing)
Gritting	£225
Earmarked Funds	£1000 for Elections/Referendum
	£0.00 - £351.27 Defibrillator funds spent
	£1,000 for Neighbourhood Plan
	£5,000 for Match spend to S106 contributions outstanding
Minimum Retention Funds held	£6,608.75

Street lighting loan balance is £11,465 with final payment due March 2023.

Questions from Parishioners

Tim Underwood asked if the housing build at Pikes Marsh had made any effect on the parish precept. The parish precept has been held at the same amount for the last 3 years and this has been reflected in a decrease on the Council Tax Band D.

Mrs Kate Sarley, Chairman of Noah's Ark Nursery Group presented an update on the nursery's current financial position. Kate predicted that the nursery was facing closure by the end of the year with the loss of up to 7 employees. She had met with District Councillor Lee Parker and MP

James Cartlidge to discuss the issues being faced. The County Councillor for Essex, David Finch had advised that ECC was not in a position to support the group financially but had offered suggestions on how it provides its service as a nursery. Cllr James Finch for SCC agreed to follow up with Kate. Mrs Eunice Horrod of Cuckoo Barn raised her concerns regarding parking on Cuckoo Hill. She noted to those present that farm lorries in particular were damaging her grassed bank in their attempt to avoid vehicles manoeuvring up the hill from the junction. The Chairman advised the meeting that parking was an overall concern for the parish council. SCC Highways had previously not recommended extending restriction lines at Cuckoo Hill. Mrs Horrod asked if she could put bollards on the verge. To be referred to Steve Merry of Highways. It was agreed by all present that there was a need to improve parking generally and in particular at Cuckoo Hill plus the need to find a suitable site to accommodate the parked cars.

Tim Underwood asked for the parish council to progress the need for a Safe Crossing point in the parish. To add to next agenda.

This concluded the business.