

Iken Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Held on Friday 18 May 2018 at Iken Village Hall commencing at 6pm

PRESENT

Councillors Loulou Cook, Colin Chamberlain, Richard Mann, Norman Johnson, Hugh Waterer, John Hailes, Clerk Lorraine Lloyd

Iken residents: Audrey Power, Annabel Chamberlain, Penny Johnson, David and Sue Spindler, Chris Ridsdale

IN ATTENDANCE

Andrew Reid, Suffolk County Council, Member for Wilford Division

APOLOGIES

Sir Thomas Hughes-Hallet, Sir John and Lady Gieve

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

No new disclosures other than river wall defences

REPORT FROM ANDREW REID

Andrew gave an overview of his written report which had been previously received and circulated to Councillors. In February this year the County Council agreed its budget for 2018/19, based on the need to save £23.9m given reductions in grant funding from central government. The budget changes included savings from each of Adult and Community Services, Health, Wellbeing and Children's Services, Fire and Public Safety, Resource and Corporate Services.

Council Tax had been raised by 2.99%, which is the first increase since 2009. The National Adult Social Care Precept that is ring-fenced to help fund Adult Social Care was also raised by 2%. Despite these increases, Suffolk County Council will transfer around £3 million from reserves but Andrew said this was not sustainable in the long-term. New transformation programmes were launched in November 2017 which will focus on reducing existing overspends and meeting the forecast budget gap of £56m to 2021.

Education: Last year GCSEs performance in Suffolk showed a considerable improvement.

Children: Last year the fostering service launched a campaign for fostering children in the county. Reasons for why there is an increase in children needing foster care may be due to foster carers becoming old and having to retire. If we do know of families who would be foster carers Andrew asked if we could refer them to the website.

Looking after children: Ofsted focussed on where we fared well which is on sharing information.

Further details are available in the written report. Andrew took questions from the floor on his report as follows:

John Hailes – asked in what areas budget reductions had been made. Andrew replied that just under one half was in education and overall the budget is down 60% compared to a few years ago. SCC are always looking at new ways of working efficiently. A point was raised whether the budget cuts had been to the detriment of our roads. David Spindler pointed to a surprising inefficiency finding a sweeper was working on bank holiday Monday at no doubt double rates. He was in a Norse vehicle. Andrew will investigate this incident. He admitted there had been severe cuts to the Highways budget. There is going to be a review of Suffolk County Council's highways contract with Kier.

Potholes were discussed. There are criteria for prioritising potholes. Andrew was asked how much compensation has been paid out for vehicle damage caused by ill maintained roads. Andrew replied that it was over £200,000 and mentioned pothole damage was an issue which had affected him personally. It was asked if it is possible to repair roads without closing them off and a recent very inconvenient closure at Snape was mentioned. Andrew responded that there were health and safety issues and referred to a fatality as a highway repair site a few years ago. . Andrew

stated that if potholes were not reported then SCC can't do anything about them. Evidence is required. Traffic lights are used at road repair sites to maintain traffic flow as far as possible. Another point raised was that sometimes after work is completed the signs aren't promptly taken away. Andrew stipulated that he needs to be informed of problems as they occur not afterwards when intervention is too late. Another point was made about Iken roads taking a level of traffic for which they were not built and therefore disintegrating to the point of failure. At present there were not only high levels of agricultural machinery but also the substantial number of heavy trucks delivering clay to the Mann and Hailes farms for future river wall defences. Colin asked if the road might need rebuilding to cope with this. Andrew thought that traffic in Iken was lighter than had been suggested but he promised to arrange for a road engineer to investigate the situation. Andrew noted that Iken is a small village and it would be undesirable to make the roads larger. Andrew is happy to meet again to discuss what can be done.

Norman Johnson asked about the Hospital Trust merger and its possible effect on the Social Care budget. The proposal for the merger of Ipswich and Colchester hospitals had been driven by an attempt to lift the performance of Colchester. The Suffolk Social Care budget is run separately from Essex. There are bigger issues to deal with. What is important is how money can be saved by reducing unnecessary local government tiers. Andrew mentioned the co-operation achieved between Councils in shared IT, shared financial services etc., and how services can be contracted out and done more efficiently. There are various things we can do better in our county with unnecessary tiers being taken out.

Andrew was warmly thanked for coming to the meeting.

ACTION- AR to liaise with CC re visit of engineer to inspect roads.

WRITTEN REPORT FROM THERESA COFFEY MP - Received and circulated.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – None received. Andrew will enquire why we haven't heard from our District Councillor, Ray Herring.

REPORT ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS SINCE MAY 2017

Loulou Cooke read out the report:

Mr J Rutherford

Single storey extension and associated work to existing bungalow and conversion of existing garage to domestic use, Woodlands, Sandy Lane, Ref: DC/17/2998/FUL, August 2016. Supported by Parish Council

Mr Christopher and Ms Claire Darke

Change of use of land and for the construction of a stable block and paddock area, White Cottage, Sandy Lane Ref: DC/17/5062/FUL, 5.12.2017. Supported by Parish Council

Sir John and Lady Gieve

Minor alterations to existing house comprising enlarging a roof light, extending a first floor corridor to rear elevation, removal of porch, wall and enclosing a reduced carport to form a store/workshop, replacement of back door with a small window in the same opening of Thatched Cottage, 65 High Street, Iken

Ref: DC/18/0163/FUL, January 2018. Supported by Parish Council

Mr and Mrs P Davis

Ref: DC/18/0199/FUL, January 2018. Change of use of holiday cottage to residential dwelling, Yarn Hill Barn, Hill Farm Road. Supported by Parish Council

A message had been received from Mr & Mrs Davis saying they had got their planning permission and everyone in the village to be thanked for supporting them.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Colin Chamberlain, as the Responsible Financial Officer, presented the 2017/18 accounts which had been previously circulated. Norman asked about the village hall and whether it was held by the Village Hall Charity. Colin explained that the Parish Council had been given the land in 1950 and there was no evidence that the land had been transferred to any other body such as the Village Hall Charity though the idea had been considered from time to time. There was a discussion whether it might be sensible to now transfer it to the charity but Colin explained that as the Parish Council was exempt from most taxes such as on a sale, there did not seem to be any concerns that the land was not already held by Village Hall Charity and in any event to do so would cost money unnecessarily.

The accounts were unanimously approved. Colin was thanked for preparing them. The accounts and AGAR audit return were duly signed. It was noted that the new auditors are Littlejohns.

CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

Loulou explained that her term had been unexpectedly busy due to the river wall project. Everyone in the village is aware of the current proposals and she hoped everyone now has a grip of the plan. If anyone knows of anyone who needs help or advice then she asked if they could be directed to the Parish Council. Lorraine was given a vote of thanks for her hard work. John was thanked for cutting the grass around the village hall.

PUBLIC FORUM

Loulou spoke of the coastal path and pointed out that it is not made easy when we don't know what is happening with the river walls.

IKEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

The same as above

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Agreed a true record and duly signed

ELECTION OF NEW CHAIRPERSON

Norman Johnson was elected chair.

ELECTION OF NEW VICE CHAIRMAN

Tom Hughes Hallett was elected vice chair.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

1. Resignation of John Hailes. A formal letter of resignation was received from John though he mentioned that he would remain in touch with the Parish Council. NJ gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the council for JH's sterling work over the years. Lorraine will contact the elections team at SCDC to raise a vacancy notice and CC explained the procedures. It was resolved that if no election is called for in response to the Notice of Vacancy then the Council will post an advertisement on the noticeboard and website inviting candidates to put their names forward to the Parish Clerk for consideration for co-option to fill the vacancy. The advertisement should be posted for six weeks. At the next Council meeting in August the Council may consider appointing any candidate putting their names forward and if more than one candidate then there were procedures in the constitution for selecting the replacement by a vote. It was therefore resolved that conditional on there being no notice of vacancy, an advertisement inviting candidates to apply would be posted by the Parish Clerk for the period of six weeks with a view to co-opting a replacement(s) at the next Council meeting. It was noted an ordinary election was due in May of next year.
2. Data Protection (GDPR). Loulou had compiled a notice for Lorraine to send out to all those individuals on whom the IPC holds personal data. Lorraine to ask the SCDC Data Protection committee what other parish councils are being advised.

ACTION - LL Will circulate to everyone on her database.

3. Constitutional matters. Colin had attended the AOEP meeting for parish councillors in April 2018 and explained that councils in the catchment area were being asked to call for a parish precept of £50 per household on average, which in total would raise up to £300,000 per year across the entire catchment area to be put towards the river wall defence. There was no decision needed before the 2019/20 precept is determined at the December 2018 council meeting but this gave councillors an opportunity to mull it over. It was explained the District Council was constrained on the amount by which it could raise its precept but

the Parish Council is not. It was envisaged the precept would be increased for a set period, say five or six years until the river wall defences are upgraded. In discussion it appeared, without a formal vote being taken, that all the councillors present and all the members of the public present were "favourable" towards the proposal. Colin would liaise with Cllr Tim Beach of Snape who is chairing a working party of councillors across the catchment area interested on the proposal. There would be a presentation and vote at the August meeting.

4. Update on the special meeting on river wall flood defences. A £3M loan has been raised by the IDB funded by an increase of rates levied on the landowners. Landowners had also contributed about £0.5m cash so far and the community over £1.1m (including the Andren legacy) together with additional pledges of money over the next five or six years. The AOEP considers this is in line with the target. Large Charitable Trusts have also been approached. Definitive costings had not yet been done. All the river walls will now be raised to 3.3 metres thus obviating the need for any scheme of managed retreat at Stanny Farm. There was a concern expressed that some of the more affluent residents might feel that by raising the precept by £50 a year (see item 3) they may think they have done their bit and this would be worrying as there were clearly some in Iken who could contribute very much more. It was hoped that Jane Marson and/or Ray Herring as originators of the proposal would come to talk to the PC at the August meeting. It is important that Iken co-ordinates any action with other Parish Councils but there was a common view that Iken should as a major beneficiary take a lead.

ACTION- NJ to write in support to Sir Edward Greenwell.

5. Update on the broadband for Iken. HW and NJ had a meeting with Rob Anderson and Wil Gibson which had been superseded by RA moving from the village and transferring his customers to Frambroadband. NJ had spoken to Olly Stockton at Frambroadband. Funds from Suffolk Coastal have gone into a euro bid. It is going to take another six or eight weeks before Frambroadband know where they are as far as Iken is concerned. No fast answer but it is moving. Other providers were not interested in spending money because 50% of Iken is already provided. Norman advised that if anyone has not got a decent broadband to get in touch with Frambroadband direct. RA's present customers will receive a letter of transfer from Frambroadband.

ACTION – NJ to contact Frambroadband in mid June.

6. Update on Land Registry Application. The application for the first registration of the village hall site to HM Land Registry had been submitted and the appropriate fee paid.

ACTION CC to follow up

7. **AGREED-** NJ will circulate proposed dates on next meetings for the year in the next week.
8. NJ will have to sign the asbestos register at the next meeting.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING THURSDAY 16th August 6pm at the Iken Village Hall.

CC gave his apologies in respect of the next meeting as he will be absent abroad.

Grass cutting at Iken churchyard to be put on the agenda for August.

The meeting closed at 7.35pm