

Iken Parish Council
MINUTES THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held on Friday 17 May 2019 at Iken Village Hall commencing at 6pm

PRESENT

Councillors Dr Norman Johnson, Sir Tom Hughes-Hallett, Neville Howe, Kate Kilburn Clerk Lorraine Lloyd Members of the public: Sue and David Spindler, Jill Cadman, Janine Keeble, Sir John and Lady Katharine Gieve

APOLOGIES

Colin Chamberlain, Loulou Cooke (later)

IN ATTENDANCE

Karen Thomas, *Partnership and Strategy Manager for Broads, East Suffolk & Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Boards*

Karen gave an overview of Iken Engagement Plan and an update of the situation for the estuary wall improvements:

The Estuary Partnership had held a drop-in session at Snape Maltings on 27th February attended by well over 100 people to hear The East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board (ESIDB) presented their costs for the whole estuary upgrade scheme. The overall cost of £26.9 million includes a £5.1m contingency and covers some 44 kilometres of wall from Snape to Shingle Street, taking 7-8 years to complete. Costs are based on a design of an engineering and environmental standard, which is required to attract Government funding (Flood Defence Grant in Aid).

The ESIDB, who are responsible for project managing the upgrade, have estimated that potentially £10.5million of Government funds could be applied for in view of the national assets in the Alde and Ore Estuary. These include Snape Maltings and a wealth of internationally recognised wildlife habitats and, in the lower part of the Estuary, extensive grazing marshes which provide fresh water to irrigate this nationally important vegetable growing area. However, there is no guarantee, even if the Environment Agency (EA) confirm eligibility for Government funding, that it will be allocated as we are 'competing against' other national projects and funds are limited.

With a local economy of over £100million per annum, there is a huge economic and environmental benefit to managing the estuary defences for at least another 30 years, making allowances for both climate change and sea level rise in the future. Detailed modelling by HR Wallingford (an independent flood risk consultant) has provided a robust model for the estuary since the 2013 surge and confirms that the works can be delivered in line with the Estuary Plan. This is a pioneering adaptive approach providing over-toppable but resilient defences which will give some 300 homes around the estuary a reduced risk of flooding.

There had been a major boost to the campaign when the landowners and farmers had agreed a £3million fund and £1million in cash and pledges. They also agreed, having discussed the issue with The Estuary Partnership and Trust, to withdraw their plans for enabling development as a mechanism for fund-raising for flood defences in the estuary.

The Alde & Ore Estuary Trust, the charity responsible for local fund-raising, is confident that they have identified how to raise the funds. Provided Government funding is achieved, it is anticipated that £16 million needs to be raised locally over the next seven years, of which over £4million has already been secured. This will include local levy funding, Community Infrastructure Levy, parish precept, local donors, landowners, charities and Heritage Lottery Fund. Garfield Weston Foundation has given a grant of £500,000 of which £100,000 is for match funding. A further charity application will be made this spring, and the Trustee and Funding Group are now beginning to explore a Heritage Lottery Grant application for the lower estuary. Karen pointed out that if anyone was interested in any more information they could go on the AOET website.

Letters had been brought to reassure the 'at risk' householders. The letters reflect the survey information collected by IDB officers last year. The surveys demonstrate the actual levels of properties in Iken in relation to flood risk. The important point to note is that no-one will be put at increased flood risk while any works are underway on walls elsewhere in the estuary. As there is no change in flood risk there should be no need for insurance to change. Everything is positive at the moment as we are doing all we can to move through the grant funding process. People should keep looking at the Alde & Ore websites and newsletters. An engagement plan had been drafted specifically for Iken. Clay still under investigation.

It was asked what if the grant doesn't come through? Karen responded that they have to meet Defra standards. Things can always be done cheaper or patched and repaired to use less money. The estuary plan says this sort of thing. The advantage of doing it properly is that it gives everyone reassurance. There is a good argument for doing it properly. The AOET are confident that they can raise funds. Government has a target of 300,000 homes nationally which this scheme can help towards but, in terms of FDGIA, it will come down to whether other national schemes cost less and deliver more property protected.

It was asked what is the difference between the higher figure for doing work now (£26.9M) and the lower figure from the estuary plan circa £15M. Karen responded - the lower figure was an innovative way to manage the walls as cheaply as possible and whilst it's still possible to take this approach it's unlikely to attract FDGIA as the design is novel. In addition this approach did not factor in the cost of environmental surveys, mitigation and enhancement and so is likely to cost more in order to meet legislative requirements.

It was asked who would actually do the work. Karen responded – The Internal Drainage Board is doing all the proposed improvement work. The Environment Agency continue to manage and maintain the walls in the meantime.

Breaches were discussed and Hazelwood was used as an example. Karen pointed out that they couldn't actually get to the breaches to repair them. Richard Mann had access to helicopters to seal breaches. Karen said there are different ways of repairing breaches and landowners around the estuary had one tonne bags and materials available if needed to seal a breach but ultimately that's what everyone is trying to avoid.

It was asked if the work was going up to Iken Church was part of the project and the response was that the Environment Agency were continuing to work on that section. In total, £26.5million was for the whole estuary, £8.5M to do the upper estuary. £1.5 to £2 million is needed to attract FDGIA from partnership funding and this is in place.

The whole estuary approach is key to managing flood risk equitably and retaining all the important aspects of the rivers people have identified. ESIDB are only splitting the estuary into two for FDGIA application only. It was not possible to apply for individual flood cells one at a time as each wall would be likely to have a temporary increased flood risk elsewhere. They had looked at the whole estuary as an application for FDGIA but considered it simpler to apply in two business cases. Most people live in upper estuary so there is a need to keep people caring about the rest. She spoke of crossover with Coastal Path. Coastal Path has to consider the best route if there has to be a walk around the whole estuary. There has been a consultation with the Coastal Path. Various routes had been discussed – inland or new path on top of wall. Karen spoke of dog walkers and disturbance to bird life. There followed a discussion of footpaths. Money for the Coastal Path is unlikely to contribute much to sea defence work- the funds tend to be for signage, walkways, ramps *etc* to join up existing sections of path.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

None received.

CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

Four meetings of the Parish Council have been held plus the Annual Parish Meeting and a Special Parish Meeting to discuss the Alde & Ore Estuary Plan.

Additional meetings by councillors:

- i) Colin Chamberlain – Andrew Reid and Denise Mortimer of Suffolk CC to discuss state of Iken roads
- ii) Norman Johnson and Hugh Waterer – Wil Gibson, SCDC, Rob Anderson, local resident and provider of local broadband to some Iken residents to discuss extending Broadband for Iken residents
- iii) Colin Chamberlain has attended the Alde Ore Estuary partnership as the Iken representative.
- iv) Norman Johnson- IDB

MATTERS ARISING DURING THE YEAR

Membership:

- i) During the year the resignations of John Hailes, and Richard Mann were received
- ii) Hugh Waterer did not offer himself for re election
- iii) Letters of thanks and appreciation for their long service were sent to each of the above.
- iv) Kate Kilburn was co-opted

- v) The previous councillors who offered themselves for re-election with the addition of Neville Howe were elected on May 2nd 2019 without need for an election.
- vi) There remains one vacancy - any interested resident to approach the Parish Clerk or Chair.

Communications:

- vii) A database of email addresses of local residents within the confines of the new Data Protection Act to keep residents informed of events in the Parish - this is held exclusively by the Parish Clerk and is never shared with any other party.
- viii) Broadband - during the year a grant was given to Frambroadband/RADE to supply a better service to residents in Iken who have poor broadband access. There is negotiation between them and the Parochial Council about a mast on the Church. BT Open Reach currently state they may be able to provide a Fast Broadband service from August 2020

River Defences:

- ix) River defences - this has been the subject of much activity in the year. The current situation is much improved from an Iken view point over the situation a year ago in that a proposal is being developed for Iken river walls to be improved at the same time as all those within the upper estuary over the next five years (together with Aldeburgh and Snape). This will occur in a way that no house in Iken will be placed at increased flood risk.
- x) England Coastal paths - there was an address and consultation by Natural England about the possible route of the pathway but no decisions have been received.

Roads:

- xi) There have been several communications and meetings resulting in the potholes and road defects being repaired-this is an ongoing process. Individual problems can be reported on line to Suffolk County Council.

Estate:

- xii) Iken village hall was registered with the Land Registry – reference SK 385486 and is owned by the Parish Council.
- xiii) The asbestos register was signed by the Chair in May 2018.
- xiv) The environs of the village hall were cleared of brambles etc.
- xv) It appears that enabling development will not occur in the near future if at all so consideration of the future of the site will be needed.

Training:

- xvi) Defibrillator training - this was held on May 16th provided by the East Anglia Ambulance Service.

REPORT ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS SINCE MAY 2018

This had been printed out and circulated.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Had been printed and circulated. Colin Chamberlain had suggested moving the savings to a higher rate account. There was a discussion concerning approach to the Charity Commission. Neville Howe asked if the charity money would be going towards the walls. It was suggested that at this stage we were only making enquiries. It was considered that we should give thought about the intention of the charity originally. There was a suggestion of wind turbines or solar panels to benefit everyone in the village. It was pointed out that any charity money should be for general village charitable causes. There are people in the village who are not that well off and a little support from time to time would be most welcome. Kate Kilburn pointed out that there are funds in the Orford Surgery Trust which is a charity trust (The old Esmund House Fund) and people should see her if anyone needs help or a carer.

Tom said he would like a community site to share things. John Gieve spoke that there may be a case for some Ikenites to add to a community fund.

There was a discussion of Enabling Development.

**MINUTES OF THE IKEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
17th May 2019 carrying on from the AGM**

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

The Clerk had now set this up for Councillors to go online to register their interests.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Agreed a true record and duly signed as such.

Election of New Chairperson

Sir Tom Hughes Hallett was proposed by Dr Norman Johnson and seconded by Katharine Kilburn

Election of new Vice Chairman

Neville Howe was proposed by Sir Tom Hughes Hallett, seconded by Dr Norman Johnson

Election of Responsible Financial Officer

Colin Chamberlain was proposed by Sir Thomas Hughes Hallett and seconded by Katharine Kilburn

Election of representative on the AIdE and Ore Partnership Committee

As above

BUSINESS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

1. Any update on the broadband issue - this had already been discussed.
2. Village Hall

It was pointed out that the village hall was costing the parish money. Social events would be talked about later. It was stated that here is this plot of land, we are not currently using hall. It had been given by the Mann family. What was suggested as belonging to the village it was its only asset. Most organisations that sell land almost always regret it afterwards. We don't know what the value is. If we sold it there could be a number of uses for the money. It was a sensitive matter. Councillors should think about it with facts and figures. There had been some interest from neighbours.

It was thought it would be important to give local people who might be interested a chance to buy. It was asked if there was any harm in letting it be. We need to look at options. What about letting of building? Tom spoke of covenant on sale. A survey had been done a few times. There was a discussion about selling parts. The instinct was that we keep a bit of it. The council to do a bit of research and have a party to discuss it with everyone. It was pointed out that Michael Bedford gave value of £ 650000 for the plot for say two residences. Tom said if anyone knows what other villages have done to let us know. There was a suggestion to do the roof up and put solar panels on that.

3. Clerks Pay

It was agreed the clerk should be paid in the manner which she had requested. Tom to sort out how this is to be achieved with Colin.

The Chairman thanked Norman hugely from both himself, the Council and from village as whole. Huge thanks were also extended to Lorraine.

The clerk will be going to planning training in the new system on 7th June and said there is a place for another person if anyone wished to join her.

The Chairman finished the meeting by stating that we will work to bring village closer together, more harmonious, bring back people and make it non contentious; remove the email traffic and any tension in the council will be resolved off line. A party will be planned on a Saturday in the summer. He suggested that there should be a computer site specifically for Iken people to share information, ask for help, give, share or sell unwanted items etc. John Gieve offered to give advice on the best app. There were light-hearted suggestions for the new social group meetings, one being Iken-ho!

Future meetings to be on Friday evenings commencing at 5.30pm.

Date of the next meeting: Friday 23rd August at 5.30pm.