

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Little Bealings held at Bealings Village Hall
on Monday, 4 March 2019 at 7.00pm**

Present: Mrs Margaret Wilson, Mr D Hunter and Mr B Rufford (Parish Councillors), Mr Colin Hedgley (District Councillor) and 20 residents/members of the public

In attendance: Mrs C Ramsden, Clerk to the Parish Council

Mrs Wilson, as Chairman of the Parish Council, took the chair and welcomed those present. She explained the purpose and structure of the meeting and it was confirmed that it was a meeting of Little Bealings residents, but open to the public.

Apologies: Dr Colin Hopkins and Mr Ian Ransome (Parish Councillors).

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 6 March 2018: The minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

Matters Arising from the Minutes: The Secretary of the PCC stated that the report given last year by Mr Tate was not authorised by the Priest in Charge or the PCC and, while good, was inaccurate in stating that the PCC did not intend to sell the Angela Cobbold Hall until after the Church has been re-ordered. This had never been the case.

Parish Council Chairman's Report

The report is at Appendix 1.

There were no questions.

Other Reports

District Councillor's Report

Mr Hedgley introduced himself as a District Councillor who represented the parish, currently contained in the Woodbridge Ward. He drew attention to District and Parish elections on 2 May and urged people to vote, and to contact SCDC if they wished to stand for election as a Councillor. The amalgamation of SCDC with Waveney District Council (WDC) on 1 April would create the largest district council in the country and he explained the new Council's logo. The number of District Councillors would be cut from 90 to 55. Little Bealings would be one of 19 rural parishes represented by two District Councillors in a Carlford and Fynn Valley ward, which he had fought for, to retain the rural character distinct from Kesgrave or Martlesham. Initially there would be two planning committees at the new East Suffolk Council, merging to one as the Councillors learned more about the character of the whole area.

He had had an annual 'enabling fund' budget of £6,500 to distribute to the parishes in his ward and recent grants had been made to the Village Hall defibrillator, 20mph speed limit scheme and the café hub project. He hoped this budget would rise to £7,000 in May.

He was keen to assist anyone if they cared to contact him.

Questions asked were answered as follows:

- The new ward extended as far west as Bredfield, Clopton and Debach.
- The parish should not be worse off as a result of the merger. SCDC and WDC have been working together for many years, with leaders and teams already merged and IT very efficient. All wards would receive the same amount of enabling budget – ie £7,000 per Councillor – with grants scrutinised and approved by the District Council.
- He had arranged for an SCC highways officer to visit to see if School parking could be improved and, although there was no known solution or identified budget, the possibility of SCC contributing to an extended and refurbished car park at the Village Hall had been explored. However, this would not solve the problem of the need to walk along the road; the cost of any path provision here had been fully explored previously and was prohibitive. Installing double yellow lines was not an option; they would not be policed. He agreed that the possibility of installing flashing lights at School times to draw attention to the 20mph limit may help, but this was a highways matter. He had asked County Councillor Robin Vickery to explore whether there could be funding for this.

County Councillor Report

There was no report and Mr Hedgley advised that it may be that Mr Vickery was again unwell.

Angela Cobbold Hall Report

There were two reports:

By The Parochial Church Council

The report is at Appendix 2.

There were no questions.

By ROPETH

The Chairman of ROPETH explained that the name had come about as a result of STACH (Save the Angela Cobbold Hall) already being a registered company name and therefore not available for local use, and reflected the initial letters of the names of the three Trustees. They had received donations for the purchase of the Hall which had exceeded the amount that needed to be raised.

The report is at Appendix 3.

Questions asked were answered as follows:

- He considered that it was sometimes appropriate to refer to the PCC Secretary only by her surname.
- When ROPETH was able to proceed with the repair and running of the Hall, a meeting would be arranged to invite residents to say what they wanted from the Hall. This would be advertised via the Fynn Lark News and other means.
- At the meeting there would be cost projections for works and for grant applications to enable the Hall to offer new facilities.

Bealings Village Hall Trust Report

The report is at Appendix 4.

A question asked was answered as follows:

The community will be consulted on options for the refurbishment of the Hall.

Fynn- Lark News Report

The Co-ordinating Editor introduced himself as a resident of Great Bealings, and pointed out that the Newsletter served four parishes. It was, however, 'cradled' in Little Bealings. He passed around an edition from 1974 which had been sent out from The Rectory in Little Bealings.

The report is at Appendix 5.

There were no questions, but a distributor of the Newsletter thanked him for organising the social event for volunteers, which he had greatly appreciated. The Editor thanked the Parish Councils for allowing part of their funding contributions to be used for this. Another resident commented that the Newsletter was a great magazine and a vital source of information about local matters.

Parochial Church Council Report

The Secretary of the PCC stated that her report had been approved by the PCC and Diocesan staff.

The report is at Appendix 6.

A question asked was answered as follows:

If the café-hub project was stopped until a new priest was appointed, there was a risk that the Church would be lost sooner; allocated grant funding of £21,000 from Viridor would also be lost. A representative of the Diocesan Surveyor had visited and it was seen as a good thing to have proceeded with the works before a new priest had been appointed. More funding would be available and the £141,200 raised so far included the proceeds from the sale of the Angela Cobbold Hall. Any surplus funding would be passed on to others.

Save The Admiral's Head Group Report

The report is at Appendix 7.

Questions asked were answered as follows:

- It was very difficult for SCDC to insist that the building and car park were maintained and kept tidy.
- Although the contents of the ground floor had been sold off and it was empty, there was no other approved use: it was still a pub.
- The focus of STAHG was to run regular pop-up pubs to show local demand and to liaise with the District Council over options for obtaining the pub.
- There were many fund raising options available but the issue was how to get ownership.
- The pub will be able to join to the new public sewer, if the owners choose to do so. Any existing obligation to accommodate waste from the adjoining property would logically remain.

Any Other Business:

2018 Village Review:

A resident said that the Review had shown some support for affordable social housing, but this had not been taken forward. In considering the status of the parish as a 'small village', as opposed to 'the countryside' the Parish Council has also erroneously concluded that there were no employment opportunities in the parish, when there were: the School and Mallard House.

[The Chairman asked if the resident was recording the meeting and he confirmed that he was and was entitled to do so. The Chairman advised him that it would have been polite to say that he was intending to record at the beginning of the meeting. It was also not certain if a recording could be made, the meeting not being a meeting of the Parish Council.]

He then stated that the Council should have taken all the views expressed in the Review forward and another resident supported that someone at the Review had asked for social housing.

Another resident said that he thought that some new housing would be a good thing, bringing new people and school children into the village. It would also enable existing properties to be redeveloped.

In response to a question about what would happen to the contents of the Review, District Councillor Hedgley said that local enthusiasm for new development was often at odds with the reaction from neighbours once sites were identified. It was up to the Parish Council to identify land that would be available and put it forward. It was not possible to simply build in the countryside; a balance had to be found. While he thought bringing new people to a village was a good thing and each parish could build say, 12 affordable houses, others held the view that an aging population was not a problem. The proposals in the Local Plan resulted from people offering land for development – that was the starting point.

He confirmed that the parish did benefit from a percentage of Community Infrastructure Levy if development took place. He could ask about the Review report but the proposals in the current Local Plan Review reflected the majority view on where development should take place. It was confirmed that neither the extent of the village envelope or the Special Landscape Area were proposed to be altered.

It was reiterated that there is employment in the village. Mr Rufford pointed out that it was not possible to apply for employment at Mallard House as such and the definition of 'employment' could mean that every house which employed a gardener could be deemed a place of employment.

Café-Hub Project

The same resident asked if the Council supported the café-hub project and was advised that the Council did not have a view on it. In response to a further question it was confirmed that the Council had resolved to support the current use of the Angela Cobbold Hall, as a result of it being consulted on the planning application for change of use of the Hall to offices. The resident also suggested that the Council could give more support for a venue in the parish, such as a café, and the alternative of the re-opening of the pub to serve local needs was drawn to his attention.

Precept

The same resident asked how the budget was set each year and suggested that the Council should use more powers and undertake more activities. He was advised that the Council could be at risk of a local referendum

if it proposed a major increase and it had been advised previously that it should only hold significant funds if they were identified for specific projects. The resident pointed out that the Council could raise the precept to fund the refurbishment of the Village Hall car park.

Another resident supported the retention of the Church, having lived in a parish without one as the result of a fire, and suggested the Council should support the Church more. It was explained that the Council could not make a grant to the Church. The PCC Secretary said that she would advise of the situation regarding status in the future so that grants could be considered.

It was agreed that the Council could consider financial support for the refurbishment of the Village Hall car park. A member of the public said that in the past there had been financial contributions from parents using the car park via Friends of Bealings School (FOBS). The Village Hall Trust Secretary said that despite attempts to contact FOBS there had been no contributions for some four years. This was met with surprise by another member of the public, but if so, perhaps this was due to School funding cuts. It was pointed out that the cost should be met by the parents, not the School budget, although one resident considered that the School should take some responsibility for parent parking.

There were no further matters raised.

The Chairman asked if anyone objected to the meeting being recorded by a resident. There were no objections but one resident expressed surprise that a recording was being made.

The Chairman closed the meeting at approximately 8.35pm.