

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Little Bealings Parish held at the Angela Cobbold Hall on Monday, 9 March 2009 at 7.00pm

Present: Mrs F Evans, Mr K Beaumont, Mr P Carr, Mrs F Hopkins, Miss D Williams and Mrs M Wilson (all Parish Councillors), Mr P Bellfield (County Councillor) and Mr I Jowers (District Councillor) both for part of the meeting, and thirty three parishioners/members of the public

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

Mrs Evans, as Chairman of the Parish Council, took the chair, welcomed those present and introduced the parish councillors.

Apologies: These were received from Dr C Rowe.

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 10 March 2008 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

Matters Arising from the Minutes:

None.

Reports:

Parish Council Chairman's Report:

The Chairman reported that Mrs F Hopkins had been co-opted to the Council in November to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mrs J Shaw. Mr P Carr had been elected Vice Chairman. On behalf of the Council Miss Williams had attended Police liaison meetings, Mr Carr attended Save Our Rural Roads (SORR) group, and the Chairman and Mr Carr attended Suffolk Association of Local Councils meetings and represented the Council on the Joint Parish Plan Steering Group. The Chairman also represented the Council on the Village Hall Management Committee and, with Mrs Wilson, had attended Local Government Review (LGR) meetings. Mr Beaumont, Mr Carr and Mrs Hopkins had studied the Local Development Framework (LDF). Mrs Cook continued as Footpath and Tree Warden, with Mr Ball undertaking maintenance work.

Meetings: There have been six scheduled meetings during the last year, plus four extra to consider planning applications and one to deal with the LDF consultation.

Parish Plan: The Council has supported the process and will be discussing the Actions arising from the survey data. An Exhibition will present the findings to residents and the JPPSG is keen to see how the Actions will be implemented.

LDF: This will replace the Local Plan and the Council has responded to the consultation on options and site allocations. Community involvement is an important part of the new system.

Planning Applications: All the applications received were approved, or approved with amendments. Planning permission had been granted for the change of use for the Grove Farm buildings for commercial and industrial use, but the developer still hoped to build houses with the support of the Council.

Highways: The resurfacing of Martlesham Road has been completed and a flooding problem cured. Traffic lights on the A1214 have been removed following a trial by SCC. Membership of SORR has grown to 16 villages and the group has the respect and co-operation of SCC. The parish continues to belong to SCC's P3 scheme and maintenance work is carried out by George Ball, overseen by Jenny Cook.

Police: Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) have been introduced as a new approach to community policing. The parish belongs to the Kesgrave 12PT (named to denote that it has 12 member parishes) and councils, community partners and volunteers work with police staff to ensure local people receive an equal service, irrespective of location. In addition PC Wright has attended Council meetings or sent a written report. Apart from a school parking issue, Little Bealings is relatively crime and problem free.

LGR: The consultation timetable for this was very tight, with the options of either two Councils for Suffolk (Rural Suffolk and North Haven, the latter comprising a Greater Ipswich, Felixstowe and 46 fringe villages including Lt Bealings) or a One Suffolk Council. A well attended public meeting was held with Gt Bealings and Playford to consider the implications. The Council submitted its view to the Boundary Committee that it preferred a One Suffolk Council, but that, should two Councils be put in place, Lt Bealings should be a part of Rural Suffolk, not North Haven. Recently the decision date from the Boundary Committee had been amended and submissions can be made until 14 May.

Gypsies: Gypsies camped on a field without planning permission in the village with the acquiescence of the County Council. SCDC was unable to act as it had no alternative site to offer in the district. The matter was resolved when the field was sold privately and the gypsies moved away.

Finance: The Council's income for the year is expected to be around £5,500 and expenditure around £5,400. Annual grants had totalled £635, made to the Village Hall, Playing Field, Benefice Magazine, Grundisburgh Newsletter and Coastal Accessible Transport.

Walks Leaflet: A Walks Leaflet had been published, with financial support from the County Council containing a map and four local routes. The Council had applied for funding for interpretation boards. Copies of the leaflet are available at the Village Hall, Admiral's Head pub, the Church and from the Clerk.

Welcome Leaflet: This is produced for new residents and is available on request.

Suffolk Association of Local Councils: The Council had continued to belong to SALC, a source of guidance on local governance and its representatives have attended area meetings.

Website: www.little-bealings.suffolk.gov.uk Jenny Shaw had kindly offered to continue as webmaster. The website contains up to date information on the Council, Parish Plan, John Belstead Playing Field, bus timetables and a local history by Mr J Pawsey. More information is always welcome to keep it lively.

It has been a busy year and, with the development of the Parish Plan and changes in local government structure, this is expected to continue.

LDF

Mr Beaumont reported the Council's response to the LDF consultation, including that it did not wish to see any expansion of the village envelope and that planning decisions will be based upon maintaining the rural nature of Little Bealings and its surroundings, with flexibility for considering individual applications for development outside the current envelope.

Parish Plan

Mr Holmes, Secretary of the Joint Parish Plan Steering Group, reported that there had been a 70% response to the residents' surveys. The Plan will be presented to the three parishes of Gt and Lt Bealings and Playford at an Exhibition on 25 April. Full colour copies of the Plan will be available. In response to a question from a resident Mrs Hopkins confirmed that there had been co-ordination of the views expressed by residents in the surveys and the Council's LDF consultation response.

County Councillor's Report

Mr Bellfield reported that the rise of 2.45% in the County Council share of the Council Tax was the lowest ever. The County Council was considered by the Audit Commission to be one of the most cost-efficient councils in England, with a 4 star rating. It was important that views on the LGR were repeated during the further consultation period and the decision would be before Parliament in December. Despite the changes, county council elections would still take place in June. Mr Bellfield had been pleased to provide funding from his locality budget for the Walks Leaflet.

Bealings School

Ms Farrell reported on the Bealings School Community Food Initiative, whereby local residents would grow, cook and eat food together. To be successful the project required the support of the Council and needed funding and planning. Mr Bathgate, the Head Teacher, reported that the School had 94 pupils, half of whom were from the local area. The School was seen to be innovative for Suffolk teacher training and had also welcomed visiting teachers from Italy and Denmark. It hoped to hold an Open Day for everyone in the village to see how it worked. In response to a question Mr Bathgate said that he would be interested in the School becoming a regular contributor to the Benefice Magazine and would meet with Mr Porter to discuss this further.

District Councillor's Report

Mr Jowers reported that most of the planning applications dealt with during the year had been determined in line with the Parish Council's recommendation – proof the District Council did listen. The LDF would be in place by the end of 2009, with contentious issues being determined by an Inspector. The Parish Council can pursue housing development at Grove Farm via the LDF if it wishes. The District Council share of the Council Tax would rise by 2.99%, reflecting national salary awards.

Village Hall and John Belstead Playing Field Report:

Mrs Shaw reported that 2008 had seen the grand opening of the refurbished Playing Field by The Hon Jill Ganzoni. 'Bealings Olympics' had been held last September and there was now a Boules Pitch.

The Village Hall had acquired a new microwave cooker and new electrics, sound equipment and back doors for the stage. Some of the work had been carried out by the Bealings Youth Drama Group. In 2009 the external front wall of the Hall will be replaced and new windows fitted. The car park entrance will be improved and a leak in the roof is to be investigated. Seven clubs use the Hall regularly, as well

as classes and school use. There are also children's parties and bookings for the snooker room. Hire charges have been increased to meet increased heating costs and more income is needed to cover the insurance and maintenance costs of the Playing Field. Reserves needed to be spent before further grant funding could be secured.

Roger Roseboom will be standing down as Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee after three years in post. There are fourteen Trustees on the Committee, with two current vacancies. Mrs Shaw thanked those who had made donations, and hoped that further support and donations would be forthcoming.

Bealings Bowls Club Report:

The President, Mr Jack Lilley, was accompanied by the Secretary, Mrs D Sedgwick and Club Captain, Eric Sedgwick. The club was several decades old, having played at The Grove and with a local membership. Now there were few local members. The club had moved to its current location in the 1960s and the costs of looking after the green and clubhouse were met by the club. New members were needed if the club was to maintain the green and meet its commitments for the coming season. Mr Porter suggested promoting the club via the Benefice Magazine.

Bealings Carpet Bowls Club

Mr White, the Secretary, reported that the club had been formed in 1989 and still had some of the original members. By 1991 membership was up to 46 and matches against others clubs began. There are now 47 members and the club is full. It entered the Suffolk County Summer League for the first time in 2008 and will participate again during 2009, as well as enjoying social games and competing for the club's Shilling Cup.

Parochial Church Council Report:

Mrs Tate, one of seven elders in the Benefice, reported that Revd Stentiford had been installed as a Canon of Bury St Edmunds Cathedral by the Bishop in November 2008. The Church Wardens are Geoff and Paddy Bills. During the year All Saints Church has been refurbished, with the walls being painted, heaters renovated and new curtains. Much of the work had been funded by an ex-parishioner, June Johnson. Attendance at services during the year had declined, but over 40% of the population had attended at Christmas. There were 23 special services in 2008: 11 funerals, 8 baptisms and 4 weddings. The Church lights had been illuminated to mark local celebrations on many occasions. The Church also enjoyed use of the refurbished Angela Cobbold Memorial Hall, which is now well managed by Vicki Carr. Fund raising events during the year had included the Plant Sale, a Pancake Supper, Harvest Lunch and a concert.

Tiddlywinks

Mrs Merry, a Church elder, had started the Tiddlywinks Mums and Tots Group for 2 – 4 year olds, meeting monthly during term times. The activities had a religious theme and included crafts, music and play for families in the Benefice. The group also attended some church services and had held a Good Friday workshop. Thanks were due to Vicki Carr for providing refreshments.

Women's Institute Report:

Mrs Cook reported that the WI had monthly meetings and also had a thriving walking group, quizzes, reading groups and played boules. There were also WI run courses and events, such as an exhibition at Endeavour House to mark 90 years of WI in East Suffolk. The group had won the people's award at the Suffolk Show. It also undertook charity work, such as restoring books to send abroad, and was investigating bulk buying schemes and car share.

Phoenix Folk Dance Club Report:

The Club had had another successful year, with an increase in the number of dancers from outside the village. The group had enjoyed practising both new and old dances in the village hall, although rain from the leaking roof had caused a problem on some occasions.

The Benefice Magazine Report:

Mr Porter reported that this was the first year the Magazine had been distributed free to all households in the Benefice, supported by advertising charges. Income had increased from subscriptions totalling £1,155 the previous year, to £1,436 from advertising and parish council donations. Advertising space had been filled and the quality, style and appearance of the Magazine had not been adversely affected. There had been some downturn in advertising in 2009, but the Magazine was still viable. New

advertisers were welcome. Thanks were due to the parish councils, volunteer distributors, and especially to Geoff Bills and Tim Llewellyn.

Annual Plant Sale:

Mr Porter reported that the next sale would be on 25 April and would be held in the Village Hall for the second year running. The sale was run by the Church, with profits divided between All Saints and St Mary's in Gt Bealings, but it had become a popular village event and also brought visitors to the village. Last year's sale had raised just over £2,500, a new record. Entry this year would be by programme. Both the Parish Plan Exhibition and lunch at the Admiral's Head would be promoted. More volunteers were always needed to help prepare for and clear up after the event. Thanks were due to all who helped last year; not only was the event successful in raising funds it also generated excellent community spirit in the two villages.

Wolsey Miniaturists' Club Report:

Mr Carr reported that the Club met monthly. Membership had decreased from 25 to 16 and new members were welcome. Expert advice was available and social events. The next meeting would be on miniature book making.

The Admiral's Head

The Chairman read out a report from Mrs D'Angelo concerning a number of problems that the pub had had with drainage and the septic tank recently, resulting in a leak in The Street. The District Council considered the problem was caused by several soakaways in the area. It had been planned to build a new soakaway in the pub car park but the wet soil had made it impossible to pass the necessary environmental percolation test. As it was not economically viable to have the tank emptied every 7-10 days, an application is being made to Anglian Water to connect to the mains drains. There is legislative provision for an area without main sewerage to make application on the grounds that environmental changes have resulted in the failure of a private septic tank system and no other economical solution can be found. Other residents are welcome to join in the application. Mrs D'Angelo assured the meeting that they are very concerned about the problem and are actively seeking a solution

Any Other Business: No matters were raised.

The Chairman thanked those present for attending and closed the meeting at 8.30pm.