

# DRAFT

## BRANDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Village Hall on 25 April 2007

**Present** : Councillors D Risk (Chairman), S Thurlow, H. Saxton, K Churchill, C. McArthur, P Summers and J Garratt  
Parish Clerk and RFO A M Hounsell  
County Cllr P Bellfield  
Parish Historical Recorder W Woodland  
Parishioners 8

#### **1-0708 - Chairman's welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The chairman welcomed those present to the meeting and advised that apologies had been received from Jackie Hounsell, Ruth Risk, Ruth Garratt, Anne Hayward and Phil and Chris Bays

#### **2-0708 - Minutes of previous Annual Parish Meeting**

The minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting of 24 April 2006 were accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record

#### **3-0708 - Matters arising from previous minutes**

- (i) Drainage and flooding in The Street – the Clerk advised that further work was to be undertaken by Suffolk County Council (SCC) in The Street including provision of an offlet from the kerb at no. 37 and that it was hoped that this would further improve the drainage. This work will not be executed until June 2007. The council have continued the dialogue with the county council on this matter.  
Mr D Evans pointed out the same problem of drainage arose at his property. The Chairman pointed out that the Council had not been previously made aware of such problem and asked that Mr Evans monitor the situation and advise to the council who will take it up with SCC if appropriate.
- (ii) Speeding in The Street – the Chairman advised that the council were continuing to press the police and the county council on this matter and there was some small signs of improvement. He also advised that the newly appointed community police officer (WPC Trudy Beckwith) is keen to do something about this matter and will be making more frequent visits.  
Following the efforts of Mr Peter Thurlow, Suffolk County Council had executed additional white-lining as a speed reduction measure. Mr Thurlow advised that he has further recommendations if asked.  
The Chairman re-affirmed that the Council would continue to vigorously pursue this issue.

#### **4-0708 - Chairman's review of 2006-2007.**

The Chairman reported upon the previous year – see attached notes

#### **5-0708 - Financial Report**

The RFO presented a brief summary report indicating that the Council's financial affairs remained healthy (see attached). He also thanked Mr D Evans for his help in carrying out the internal audit of the Council's accounts.

#### **6-0708 - Village Hall**

Councillor Sue Thurlow (in her role of Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee) presented a brief report whilst advising that she fully reported to the Annual General Meeting of the Hall – see attached

#### **7.1-0708 - Report from Suffolk County Councillor**

Cty. Cllr P Bellfield stated that the county council's biggest problem is its budget and council tax required to meet it. Last year's budget saving needed to be £24 M – this year's £22M – in order to align the budget and council tax. The council's costs are not aligned to the retail price index and thus the council tax increases by more than headline inflation. The district council, having changed its Chief Executive, has introduced cost saving measures, such as reducing the number of directors from 6 to 4, and these have saved a large measure of its budget. The county council has to do the same

Recommendations are being presented to save money in restructuring. This will not result in 10,000 redundancies (as has been reported in the local press) - not least because the council does not employ 10,000 in total. Where redundancies arise through partnering, the new partner has to take on the redundant staff on the same terms. A great deal of time and effort has been put into the restructuring of schools. On the advice of a separate panel, including "outsiders", the county school system will be changing from a 3-tier system to 2-tier. Academic achievement has been shown to be higher in 2-tier systems.

Mr Bellfield reported that the county council has been awarded 4 star status by the Audit C. Work is continuing with other councils in sharing services and cost centres he also referred to the possibility of Unitary Authority status for Ipswich, which would result in reduced income to the county council without proportionate reduction in expenditure. However, he pointed out that the new authority must be run without increase in cost and the county council does not believe this is possible.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bellfield for his attendance at this meeting and for his help and support to the parish council throughout the year.

#### **7.2-0708 Report from Suffolk Coastal District Councillor**

In the absence of the District Councillor, no report was presented.

#### **8-0708 - Any other business as may be raised and accepted as appropriate by the Chairman**

- (i) The Chairman advised that following last week's meeting to discuss a Parish Plan (PP) for Brandeston, there is a list of those willing to help on the matter but more volunteers were welcome. This subject will be on the agenda for the next parish council meeting on 09 May.
- (ii) The subject of the uncut grass on the playing field was raised. Councillor Thurlow advised that Brandeston Hall staff had always done this - but not recently. They were now to resume and she would remind them of this.
- (iii) Councillor Thurlow advised the meeting that the parish council has entered the Village of the Year competition, which has a prize of £1,000. Inspectors will visit the village in June. Councillor Thurlow will place a notice in the Parish magazine asking for the appropriate support from villagers,
- (iv) Mention was made of the efforts of The Queen's Head in keeping the grass at the adjacent triangle well cut. The Clerk was asked to write to the landlord thanking him for his support.
- (v) The Chairman advised the meeting that two of the present councillors were not standing for re-election.

Mr John Garratt has given 25 years of service to the council and has fulfilled the role of Tree Officer for a large part of that time.

Mr Chris McArthur has moved away from the village having given 12 years of service. He had confirmed he would be willing to help in the future in any way possible.

The Chairman said that the council will greatly miss the efforts and support of these two councillors and he thanked them on behalf of the villager.

The Chairman thanked all present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.40 pm