

## BRANDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at the Village Hall on Wednesday, 11 March 2009

### **Present**

Councillors D Risk (Chairman) (DR), W Elson (WE), H Saxton (HS), K Churchill (KS), S Thurlow (ST) and J Fielder (JF),  
Parish Clerk and RFO A M Hounsell  
County Councillor P Bellfield  
Parishioner Mr N Hayward

### **1-0809/7 - Open discussion with members of the public who may be present**

PCSO Christian Hassler sent his apologies but had sent a report to the Clerk, advising as follows :-

#### **Crime Report**

*I am happy to report that from the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2009 / 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2009 there were no reported crimes in the village of Brandeston.*

#### **Speeding and Parking concerns**

*I will endeavour to use the speed gun when I am able to as the Constabulary is trying to cut costs and they have removed our beat car from service. I am actively seeking other forms of transport i.e. the Mobile Police station or a sponsored vehicle so that I may get out visiting my parishes that depend on me.*

#### **Crime Prevention Advice**

*Keep an eye out for bogus door-to-door callers claiming to be from the council, electric or water board.*

*Ask for picture Identification. Don't be afraid to call and verify who they are.*

*No ID No entry!!!*

*Remember if you are in doubt keep them out!*

*Then call the Police on 999*

### **2-0809/7 - Report of Cty. Cllr. Peter Bellfield and Dist Cllr Bob Snell**

Cty Cllr Bellfield reported as follows :-

*The SCC element of Council Tax for 2009-10 would rise by 2.45% compared to the Consumer Price Index rise of 3.1% and the Pensions Increase of 5.0% Savings made by the county council over the last three years amounted to £60M with a further £12M saved in the coming year budget.*

*Mr Bellfield also advised that Government Inspectors (Audit Commission) have stated that the county council is a top performing county council in terms of efficiency savings, the most cost efficient council in England and the best performing council for quality of service in the east of England. The county council is at 4 star rating and "improving well". Mr Bellfield indicated that any further draft proposals from the boundary commission for local government reorganisation in Suffolk were expected on 19 March 2009 with the end of consultation on 14 May 2009. Thereafter, the boundary commission final recommendation to the minister would be made on 15 July 2009 with the minister having six weeks to make a decision. Instruments to introduce changes will be put before parliament in December 2009. Mr Bellfield urged that the parish council's views on the possible changes should be sent again to the boundary commission during the period of consultation ending on 14 May.*

*The date for county council and European elections was confirmed as 04 June.*

The Clerk advised that Dist Cllr Bob Snell had sent his apologies but provided his report as follows :-

#### **Local Govt reorganisation**

*Mr Snell advised the date and schedule as above and stated that in response to correspondence from SCDC's Chief Executive, the BCE confirmed that no additional information was required from the District Council and that there was no need to update the affordability information previously supplied. SCDC has reserved the right to make further comment if new draft proposals appear on 19 March.*

#### **Sizewell**

*EDF have confirmed their intention to nominate Sizewell as a potential site for two new nuclear plants. SCDC is presently considering its further response to such a proposal, having previously commented on the strategic criteria for site selection and on the selection process, including highlighting the need for adequate local consultation.*

#### **SCDC's financial standing**

*The latest annual assessment by the Audit Commission of how local councils manage their finances rated Suffolk Coastal as one of only 12 to score top marks for its financial standing. The assessment evaluates*

*use of resources and puts a critical microscope to every council's financial, asset and risk management. It also takes account of the way it is linked to each organization's priorities and how it supports overall value for money.*

*SCDC scored 3, which rates us as "performing well". We were equal best in Suffolk and Norfolk and only four councils were marked better out of the 44 districts in the eastern region.*

#### **Local Development Framework**

*Public consultation on the Core Strategic Options and on site specific allocations ended on 20 February 2009 and the LDF Task Group will next consider the responses prior to publication of the preferred options as part of the next stage of the framework process.*

#### **Council Tax**

*Despite continued underfunding from the Government and falling income, Suffolk Coastal will keep its Council Tax increase in April to just eight pence a week on its average Band D bill, a 2.9 per cent increase in Suffolk Coastal's share of the Council Tax bill. All services will be critically reviewed to see where savings are possible, to offset falling income.*

*This is the 13th consecutive year that Suffolk Coastal has set a single figure increase in its Council Tax. The total Council Tax bill for the average Band D home in Suffolk Coastal will now be £1,440.85. This is made up of £1,100.16 for Suffolk County Council, £156.06 for Suffolk Police (once gain, more than the SCDC amount!), £145.26 for Suffolk Coastal, and £39.37 is the average parish/town council precept. The percentage split of the average Council Tax bill is 76.4% to the County Council, 10.8% to the Police, 10.1% to Suffolk Coastal, and 2.7% to the town/parish council.*

#### **3-0708/7 - Formal Meeting Opening, Chairman's Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chairman then formally opened the meeting and welcomed those present. He confirmed receipt of apologies for absence from Dist Cllr Bob Snell, PCSO Christian Hassler and Parish Historical Recorder Mrs W Woodland.

#### **4-0809/7 - To Receive Councillors' Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items**

ST declared interest in Agenda items 9 (i) and (ii).

#### **5-0809/7 - Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The minutes of the meeting of 21 January 2009 were signed as a true record.

#### **6-0809/7 - Matters arising from previous minutes**

- (i) Drainage in The Street (previous minute 6-0809/6 (i))  
The Clerk confirmed that he had contacted SCC, Highways as instructed, who advised that they will install a further gully at the BT manhole, to reshape the road locally to draw the water to the new gully and connect it into the carrier drain that runs in front of The Cottage. The work should be completed by March 2009.
- (ii) Legal Charge on BVH&RG (previous minute 6-0809/6(ii))  
The Clerk confirmed that the solicitor had sent the layout plans to the Lottery on 16 January 2009 with a reminder on 20 January but had received no reply. The Council agreed to leave the matter in abeyance for the time being.
- (iii) Hedge at Footway, Hill House (previous minute 6-0809/6(iii))  
The Clerk confirmed that he had acknowledged the Gill's letter and had contacted SCC, Highways and advised them that the householders of Hill House had indicated that the Highways Department had assumed responsibility for the hedge maintenance. The Highways Dept. had expressed surprise at this statement but agreed that if the responsibility was theirs they would undertake the necessary work by 20 March 2009.  
The Clerk was instructed to ask SCC to confirm that hedge is indeed the responsibility of SCC
- (iv) Possible Purchase of Generator (previous minute 6-0809/5 (iv))  
The Council noted the suggestion from the village hall committee that the local authority may view Brandeston village hall as a key venue for refuge in the event of an emergency attracting large numbers of people with a consequent need for a very robust power supply. The committee asked that the parish Council consider (should this become the case) seeking funds from the local authorities to permit the purchase of a suitable large and – importantly – quiet generator. It was suggested that this might involve a cost of around £25,000.  
The Council agreed to continue investigations.

- (v) Local Development Framework (previous minute 11-0809/6)  
The Clerk confirmed that he had written to SCDC to advise them of the Council's position in respect of the proposals for Brandeston in the consultation documents issued by SCDC; namely that the proposed Settlement Hierarchy is supported with Brandeston village as a Local Service Centre and that the existing envelope for Brandeston be retained (thereby rejecting the possible development area in Mutton Lane).

#### **7-0809/7 - Planning**

There were no planning matters to be raised.

#### **8-0809/7 - Financial Report by RFO (The Clerk)**

The Clerk circulated the current cashbook statement showing that the main account has a current balance of £2,931.97. For the 100+ account the Clerk advised that the balance was £456.18. The Clerk confirmed that he had applied for VAT refund on this year's expenditure amounting to £310.13. This includes £69.96 spent from the 100+ account and the Council agreed transfer of this sum by cheque. The Clerk confirmed that the Council's finances remained satisfactory with a likely balance at year end of around £3,000 in the main account. The balance in the 100+ account will be dependent upon the number of renewals to the Club.

#### **9-0809/7 - Financial Matters**

The Council agreed payments as follows :-

- (i) To BVH&RG of £14.75 for the Council and Annual Parish Meetings arranged for 20 May 2009
- (ii) For distribution by the Clerk of 100+ prizes for 2009-2010 of - £140 (payable 01 April 2009) and further payments of £140 (payable 01 August 2009), £185 (payable 01 November 2009) and £105 (payable 01 January 2010) (All from 100+ account – total £570)

#### **10-0809/7 – Complaint from villager of toxic materials at Office Farm.**

The Chairman advised of a complaint from Mutton Lane that there appeared to be significant quantities of asbestos in the derelict buildings at Office Farm. Some advice appears to indicate that there is no danger but the Clerk was instructed to raise this matter with the Environmental Health Dept. at SCDC

#### **11-0809/7 - Correspondence**

The Clerk indicated that notification had been received from SCC of closure of the Brandeston to Cretingham road for the period 23-27 March.

There was no other correspondence requiring attention.

#### **12-0809/7 - Any other business as may be raised and accepted as appropriate by the Chairman**

WE stated that he and others had noted churning of bridleways and footpaths by horse-riders to the detriment of walkers and cyclists. The Clerk was instructed to write to Mrs Lydia Harvey requesting her assistance in avoiding this problem.

#### **13-0809/7- Date of Next Meeting**

Date of the next meeting was confirmed as the Annual Council Meeting at 7.00 pm on 20 May 2009 followed by the Annual Parish meeting at 8.00 pm.

The Council agreed that the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting comprise :-

Chairman's welcome and acceptance of apologies for absence.

To sign the minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting of 14 May 2008 and the Parish Meeting of 11 February 2009 as true records (after amendment if necessary)

Matters arising from previous minutes

Chairman's review of 2008-2009

Financial Report

Village Hall Report

Reports from Suffolk County Councillor and Suffolk Coastal District Councillor (if present)

Any other business as may be raised and accepted as appropriate by the Chairman

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm