

Cockfield Parish Council Meeting Report

The Parish Council met on Thursday 22nd January 2015

The Parish Council elections will take place in May. We are currently one councillor short of our full complement, and the councillors present were asked to spread the word that nominations to stand will be welcome

A dog bin has now been installed in Old Hall Lane which is being used by dog walkers. There was been an issue regarding the emptying of the bin which has resulted in the Clerk receiving confirmation from Babergh DC that it will be emptied weekly. The Parish Council thanked all those who use the bin and requested that they continue to do so

Our new Police Officer, PC Gary Austin introduced himself and gave a brief resumé of his career. He added that he will be aided in policing his part of Babergh West by PCSO Sam Chandler who will be joining him in the near future. Since the last report 4 crimes have been committed, an assault and harassment, both of which have been detected and 2 burglaries. The main concern in the area is burglaries and PC Austin emphasised the need for everyone to be alert for suspicious activities, including during daylight hours, and report any concerns using the 101 number. He also added that advice on crime protection is available to anyone who needs it

With regard to our local needs housing plans, our County Councillor, Jenny Antill, submitted a report that she has been working at County level to move things forward and that there now appears to be a more positive approach

The rest of Mrs Antill's report indicated that the County will be able to present a balanced budget for 2015/6, without recourse to financial reserves. She also noted that winter gritting capacity in the County has been increased which should significantly increase the service this winter

Our District Councillor, Clive Arthey, reported on the recent visit by a number of Cockfield Parish Councillors to the Energy from Waste plant at Great Blakenham. There was a positive response from the Councillors who attended and, as this had been one of the first of such visits to the plant, some suggestions were made as to how the experience could be enhanced

The meeting then considered the Parish Precept for 2015/6 and established a figure which will enable us to maintain the facilities in the village to the standard which we have come to expect

A discussion regarding the pavilion revealed that Sport England have agreed to extend their funding for improvements until the end of September, with investigations continuing with other bodies who have offered grants. The work on improving the pavilion drains will commence in the near future

The Parish Council again thanked all the volunteers who have worked on Earl's Meadow recently

Our footpaths and cemetery were reported as in good condition, noting the ongoing surface concerns with the footpath between Howe Lane and the Church at the Howe Lane end. The river around the Abbey footpath bridge has now been cleared

A road closure notice has been received for Howe lane and Chapel Road to be closed from 16th to 20th February for (long overdue!) carriageway repairs

It is now 3 years since Cockfield won the Suffolk Village of the Year competition. The Council will now consider the possibility of entering again this year

The village litter pick will take place during the weekend of 21st and 22nd March, and volunteers will be asked to put forward their names to clear various parts of the village

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday 26th March at 7.30 pm. The annual Village Meeting will take place in the Village Hall on Thursday 23rd April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

The Council may be contacted through the Clerk, Alan Morgan on 01284 828072

RJP