

Cockfield Parish Council Meeting Report

The Parish Council met on Thursday 26th July 2012

The meeting opened at 7.30 pm and commenced with members agreeing the Suffolk Code of Conduct 2012

It was reported that there have been no nominations to fill the vacancy on the Parish Council - councillors were requested to continue to work to identify suitable candidates

The celebration of HM the Queen's Diamond Jubilee was a great success. The majority of the village turned out to enjoy the Big Lunch on the Sunday, and even more people attended the picnic and concert on the Monday. The total cost of the weekend was just under £7500, with the major contributors to this being the hire of the marquee (which, given the weather, was key to the success of the weekend), food, commemorative mugs, fireworks and the band. Donations from Green Links, local businesses and individuals totalled £4000 leaving the balance to be funded by grants from the Parish Council and Community Council. The Parish Council expressed thanks on behalf of the village to everyone who had made a contribution to this memorable event, either through helping over the weekend or making a donation

Cockfield has beaten three other villages to become Babergh Village of the Year. This means that, in addition to a trophy and cash prize, we will go forward to the Suffolk County Village of the Year competition. Judges for this second phase will visit the village on Thursday 9th August

Suffolk County Council Highways Management visited the village during June following representations made by the Parish Council and residents regarding speeding in the village. The major areas of concern identified were the A1141 south of Windsor Green, Church Lane, Chapel Road/Howe Lane, Felsham Road and the C700 through Windsor Green. The County Council committed to undertake speed surveys at these locations with a view to suggesting possible actions to reduce speeds. Now that the road resurfacing and marking actions around the village are complete, the Parish Council awaits the results of these surveys

PC Horton represented the police at the meeting, and advised that a number of actions had been taken regarding the issue of speeding in the village - a speed indicator (SID) had been temporarily placed in Cross Green, two speed checks had been carried out outside the school and one outside the garage (which resulted in one booking). Since the meeting, a further check was carried out at Cross Green on 2nd August which resulted in one caution and one fixed penalty notice being issued. Speed enforcement actions will continue

No crimes had been reported since the last meeting, although two crimes had not been reported. The police requested that the public report all crimes to them

Our County Councillor, Mr Pembroke, reported that the County Council is in surplus to budget at this stage - although he added that there are future challenges to be met in that for the period 2013-2017 there will be further reductions in grants from central government and that demands for children's services and care for the growing number of dementia sufferers will place further pressure on the Council's finances

Mr Pembroke also reported that Suffolk County Council care homes have now been transferred to an independent operator, Care UK, and finished by apologising on behalf of the County Council for the number of potholes in our roads, but assured us that they are on the case

Subsequent to the meeting, it was announced that a Wednesday bus service from Great Green to Bury St Edmunds will be reintroduced from 22nd August 2012. The service, which will be sponsored by the County Council and operated by Hadleigh Community Transport Group, will leave Cockfield at 10.38, returning from Bury at 1.30

Mr Arthey, our District Councillor congratulated the village on its Village of the Year success

He then raised the issue of the new initiative by which textiles may now be placed in blue bins using the bags that have been distributed to every household. Concerns have been expressed that this could impact upon charities which rely on textile collections for a proportion of their funding (including Cockfield School) - he explained that objective of the new initiative is to capture the 7000 tonnes per year of textiles which go into black bins and thus to landfill, not those donated to charity so those of us who donate textiles to charities should continue to do so

Our 5 First Responders now have their own phone and call sign. 2 sets of equipment (including defibrilators) have been ordered and delivery is expected in around 4 weeks. The cost of the kits (which totals in excess of £3000) has been underwritten by Cockfield Community Council, with grants promised from the Parish Council and Mr Pembroke (on behalf of the County Council)

The purchase of the meadow and railway line are still with the County legal department and we await progress from them

The paving for the bus stop on Great Green has been given the go ahead and we await an installation date

The Green's committee reported that one of the benches on Great Green requires repair and the beacon has been removed and stored until a permanent position for it is found

Earl's Meadow - the VoY judges enjoyed their visit to Earl's Meadow, and a work party is required to prepare for the next round of judging

The cemetery requires a work party for a tidy up and the bench has now been cleaned and is being oiled prior to reinstallation

Footpaths - Abbey footpath is in reasonable condition, but some overhanging branches need cutting back. The Howe Lane footpath has become overgrown and householders either side will be contacted to determine ownership of the offending Leylandii

The Parish Council noted that the war memorial is in good condition and thanks are due to Mr and Mrs Rose

Dog fouling around the village continues to be a major concern. The Parish Council has, in addition to the perpetual issue of dog fouling on Great Green, now received complaints from residents about irresponsible dog owners who refuse to clear up after their pets in Old Hall Lane and Home Meadow. We are awaiting guidance from the District Council as to what legal redress is available, but that is not really the best way for the community to approach this issue. **Dog mess is unpleasant and a danger to health. Again, we would remind all residents of their responsibilities with regard to picking up and disposing of their dogs' droppings regardless of where in the village they may be. Do we truly want the Babergh 'Village of the Year' to be blighted by dog mess?**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Thursday 27th September

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

RJP