

Cockfield Parish Council Meeting Report

The Parish Council met on Thursday 31st May 2012

The meeting opened at 7.30 pm and commenced with the election of officers. Mrs Barbara Ruffell was re-elected chairman unopposed and it was proposed that all other officers and committee members be re-elected en masse. This was agreed and the meeting proceeded with the agenda

Under matters arising from the previous meeting it was reported that, with three days to go, plans for the celebration of HM the Queen's Diamond Jubilee were well advanced and the ad hoc organising committee was anticipating an enjoyable, but very busy, weekend, with a large proportion of the village expected to attend

Unfortunately, the vacancy on the Parish Council remains unfilled, although it is hoped that progress on this issue will be evident in the near future

With regard to the open highways issues (particularly speeding), following the recent Safer Neighbourhood meeting held in Cockfield, representatives of Suffolk County Council Highways Department will meet with representatives of the Parish Council during June. This led to discussion of the need to cut back the verges on a number of lanes in the area (eg Perrydown Lane) and it was suggested that, given recent weather conditions, a return to two cuts per year should be reinstated in spite of a possible additional cost. This will also be discussed with County Highways. Further consideration was then given to the issues of potholes in roads around the village and also the overgrown state of the footpath between Felsham Road and Bradfield Road - it appears that the current County funding position has meant that maintenance of public footpaths is a low priority and no promises for rectification have been made

The Parish Council has spearheaded an entry in the 2012 Village of the Year competition. The Council believes that its presentation is excellent and we are hopeful of progressing from the Babergh round to the County final after the first round of judging in mid-June

A new bench has been installed by the pond on Great Green. This bench has been funded by awards made in previous VOY entries and, given that this is a Jubilee Year, it was agreed to install a plaque commemorating the event. Thanks were expressed by the Chairman of the Greens' Committee to Messrs Williams, Creasey and Morgan for the speedy installation of the bench

To celebrate the Jubilee, a beacon will be erected and lit on Great Green. It has been suggested by many in the village that, as a further legacy, it is found a permanent home - the Council agreed to investigate this further

In the absence of the PCSO, the Police have reported zero crimes in the village since the last meeting. The Council expressed regret that Police attendance at our meetings has recently been infrequent and it was agreed to raise the issue in the appropriate quarters

Dog fouling is an ongoing concern, although we have made progress in getting the support of the majority of (responsible) dog owners. In order to help us focus upon what action can be taken against those less responsible dog owners who do not clear up after their pets, Babergh District Council is preparing a set of guidelines which the Parish Council awaits with interest. In the meantime the investigation of installing dog bins on Great Green continues

It was reported that the purchase of the additional meadow and length of railway track with Section 106 funding is progressing slowly

Our district councillor, Mr Arthey, described a new initiative by which bags will be provided for householders to dispose of textiles in their blue waste bins. He was at pains to emphasize that this is in no way designed to compete with existing schemes being run locally, such as the school 'Phil the Bag' appeal

or local charity shops' efforts, but was rather designed to stop the vast amount of textiles currently going to landfill sites from our black wheelie bins

Mr Arthey also advised that the Great Blakenham 'energy from waste' plant is now progressing and will be running by the end of 2014 - the objective of the Suffolk Recycling Consortium being to eventually virtually eliminate landfill waste disposal

The Parish Council thanked Mr Arthey for organising the visit of some of our councillors to the recycling plant - he replied that visits will continue and invited further applications

One of our recently qualified First Responders gave a demonstration of the equipment required to operate the service. The kits, which cost £1500 each, include a defibrillator and various other pieces of apparatus, and, because of the large area covered by the village, it is recommended that 2 are purchased. The Parish Council agreed to investigate, along with County, District and Cockfield Community Councils ways of funding such a purchase

Greens' report - it was noted that the bark around the play area needs replacing

Earl's Meadow - the area will be a feature for the judging of the Village of the Year competition, and work parties will be announced to support

Cemetery report - the Cemetery bench is away for shot blasting and will be returned during June

Pavilion report - a number of repairs and improvements to the pavilion have been carried out. It was agreed that we should reinstate the Pavilion Committee, with involvement from the Community Council and the Football Clubs. A letter will be drafted inviting all users to participate in this committee and to take actions to maintain the condition of the pavilion

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Thursday 26th July

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

RJP