

Cockfield Parish Council Meeting Report

The Parish Council met on Thursday 30th May 2013

Barbara Ruffell announced her intention to stand down as Chairman - Derek Southgate was elected unopposed to replace her

The election of officers resulted in three changes of responsibility with Carl Brinkley replacing Derek Southgate as both Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council and Chairman of the Greens Management Committee. Rod Portwood assumed the new role of Highways Liaison Officer

The Emergency Planning open meeting held on 16th May was attended by 6 Parish Councillors and 8 members of the public, together with two representatives from Long Melford. Sue Herne, our District Emergency Planning Officer, gave a presentation giving the background to the latest initiatives which was followed by details of how Cockfield plans to move forward to develop a plan. The key to success in the village will be the involvement of members of the public and the Parish Council, through its sub committee, will determine the next steps

The primary school is a key part of our community and continues to face a number of ongoing challenges. Representatives from the Parish Council recently met with the Chair of Governors to discuss the current situation and offer support and assistance to ensure that the school remains viable. We understand that the governing body are hopeful that a new Head can be appointed for the commencement of the new autumn term

The Clerk announced that he has booked the Summer Holiday Activity Bus and skateboard facility to be present at the school on Wednesday 24th July. Further details are in this edition of Green Links

PC Darren Marshall joined the meeting and advised that he is now back in the area

The report from our PCSO advised that since the last meeting there have been two burglaries and one case of an item taken from a garden – no culprits have been identified

The Babergh West Safer Neighbourhood Team meeting was held in Cockfield on 21st May. Apart from the lack of feedback regarding reported crimes, the major issue raised concerned speeding throughout the village. Steve Merry from the Highways Department advised us that some data regarding speeding has been collected, but that there are areas that still need surveys to be carried out. Vehicle activated signs have been deployed and are part of the data gathering process. Once this is complete then the next stage in determining appropriate speed reduction techniques will begin

Speeding in Cockfield was adopted as the priority of the Safer Neighbourhood Team and the Police advised that they will be carrying out speed checks

Mr Merry advised that he has been made aware of the potholes in Chapel Road and will taking the actions required

The next Safer Neighbourhood Team meeting will be held on the 16th July at Little Waldingfield

Our new County Councillor, Jenny Antill introduced herself. She reported that, with council tax frozen for the next 4 years, and the government threatening further funding cuts, it is probable that front line services will be effected

The new council has launched the 'Better Broadband for Suffolk' initiative, promising a minimum speed of 2mb across the county by the end of 2015

An RSA report aiming at improving standards of education in Suffolk has suggested working with other

councils that have made improvements to achieve the required levels her

Mrs Antill finished by saying that she will endeavour to attend our Parish Council meetings and will work with us in our efforts to obtain more affordable housing and resolve our highways issues

Our District Councillor, Clive Arthey, reported that the government inspector's response to the Babergh Core Strategy is now in and available on the Babergh website. The changes recommended do not appear to impact on the parts of the strategy that effect villages such as ourselves

He also reported that information from the 2011 census is now available on line at www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk This website contains interesting statistics regarding the make up of the village

Mr Arthey finished by reporting that Hadleigh has received an award for the best household recycling centre having achieved a recycling rate of 90%

Two representatives of the Parish Council were invited to Great Barton to share our previous successful experiences in meeting local housing needs. This provided a useful exchange of views which will be helpful to both Councils

The Greens Committee reported the following

- It has been necessary to review our arrangements for cutting the edges of Great Green and a short term plan has been put into effect
- The shed roof has been refelted – thanks are due to Rodney Williams and members of the Football Club for there efforts
- The location of the dog bin on Great Green has still to be determined

At Earl's Meadow the cutting season is over and everything is growing. The meadow has been harrowed and the rides will be cut in. It is planned to put up information boards at strategic points to increase understanding of the project

The cemetery is in good condition and the gates and posts have been repaired and painted

The footpaths around the village are good, with the exception of that from Howe Lane to the Church, for which we are waiting advice from the County Council

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to Barbara Ruffell for her service as Chairman of the Council

A special Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 13th June to approve the accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2013 and the next full Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday 25th July 2013

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

RJP