

Cockfield Parish Council Meeting Report

The Parish Council met on Thursday 27th November 2014

It was confirmed that the proposed joint committee, with the Community Council, which is to investigate the updating of play equipment on Great Green, will be set up early in 2015 with a view to developing a viable project for 2016

A dog bin has now been installed in Old Hall Lane which will be emptied weekly

The Cockfield Planning & Development Survey, which was circulated to all households in the parish, has now been collected and analysed and a report on the results has been presented to the Parish Council. It was agreed unanimously to adopt the report. The introduction to the report and conclusions of the survey are to be found at the end of this report. The full results have been posted on the Village Website (www.cockfield.org.uk). Additionally, copies of the report have been lodged with the appropriate departments within Babergh District Council

There was no Police presence at the meeting and no report. We have been advised by the Police Service that there will be limited attendance at village meetings and, rather than individual village reports, there will be a general report for the area. The Parish Council agreed that this is an unsatisfactory situation and the Clerk was asked to formally express this view at a high level within the Police Service

Since the meeting, the Clerk has received an e-mail from PC Gary Austin who is our new village police officer, covering some 11 villages. PC Austin has indicated that he will attempt to attend at least one of our meetings in the first quarter of the New Year

In the absence of a Police Report it was noted that on 9th November a number of trailer curtains were slashed in the haulage yard on the A134

Our County Councillor, Jenny Antill reported that the County needs to find a further £120 million over the next 3 years, starting with £42 million in 2015/6. It is hoped to achieve these savings through efficiency savings and reducing demand for services. Residents are invited to make their views known through a questionnaire on the County Council website

Mrs Antill also advised that there are signs of good improvement in attainment among 5 to 7 year olds in Suffolk according to figures released by the Department of Education at the end of September

Our District Councillor, Clive Arthey, reported on an anti-fly tipping campaign that is being conducted with the Police. He also referred to the additional items (waxed cartons, aerosols, etc., as described in the leaflets that have been delivered to households in the district) that can now go into the blue bin

He advised that Babergh has come to a decision to build 12 council houses in Lavenham

Finally, Mr Arthey advised that nominations are invited for Community Achievement awards

Further meetings have taken place regarding the provision of local needs housing and there remains a strong will to progress the scheme

The purchase of the meadow adjacent to Bruff's Line/Earl's Meadow continues to move slowly with the issue of access to be resolved

There was a wide ranging discussion, involving members of the public, regarding an application to build six dwellings at the north-east end of Chapel Road, adjoining Bird's Lane. Interested parties, together with the Parish Council, will make their views known to Babergh which is the Planning Authority for the village

It was noted from the SALC report that Cockfield qualifies to enter the Suffolk Village of the Year contest in 2015, and a decision needs to be made as to whether or not to enter

The Greens' Committee reported that due to the amount of rain which has fallen recently, some football was cancelled over the last weekend. It was also noted that both laybys on Great Green require their surfaces repairing and edges reinstating

Earl's Meadow has received its final topping of the year and new bulbs have been planted

The footbridge on the Abbey Footpath needs debris clearing from the watercourse

The cemetery has been cleared and thanks are due to the volunteers who worked on the untended graves

The pavilion upgrading is under discussion with Sport England and a 'framework' contractor. It was also noted that concerns regarding structural issues need resolution before work commences

A notification has been received and communicated through Green Links and the Village Website that the A134 will be closed at night for resurfacing for two weeks commencing 1st December

A letter has been received from a resident of Sudbury Road regarding signage and speeding on the A134. This has been passed to Suffolk CC Highways Department

We still await drawings for the improvements to the southbound bus stop at Mill Corner and we continue to chase Highways Department for the completion of the gully repairs at the junction of the A1141 and Windsor Green

Howe Lane/Chapel Road will be resurfaced during this financial year with Great Green possibly the following year

The Parish Council will provide Highways Department with its views on possible locations for moveable Vehicle Activated Speed sensors with a view to purchasing one for the village

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday 22nd January at 7.30 pm. This will be the meeting at which the budget and precept for 2015/16 will be set together with an update of standing orders and adoption of our risk assessment

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

RJP

Cockfield Planning & Development Survey

Introduction

In June 2014 Cockfield Parish Council conducted a survey of all households in the Parish, to canvass the opinion of residents regarding growth and development over the period to 2031. This was prompted by the recent adoption of the Babergh District Council Core Strategy for the same period

The survey was delivered to every household in the Parish. The completed forms achieved a response rate of 59.5%. Clive Arthey the Parish's Babergh District Councillor, has advised that this represents a good level of return based on similar surveys in other Parishes

The questionnaire invited respondents to make their views known by indicating their level of agreement to a number of statements

The issues covered were the future size of the village, the distribution of development, the type of resident to be catered for, the preferred type of housing and the desirability of commercial development

Respondents were also invited to add their own comments to the survey

Conclusions

The overall consensus is that the village should grow larger with the majority of respondents believing that 50-100 new properties would be the appropriate level of development over a 20 year period

Opinion was very much against the village growing much larger with resistance to any development in excess of 100 properties

A small minority believed that the village should stay the same size as now, but, the results, combined with the additional comments from residents, indicate an overall understanding of the need for moderate and controlled growth if we are to maintain the current facilities available in the village

There is strong agreement that development should commence within the next 5 years

There is a preference for development to be close to existing built up area boundaries but with a stronger preference for that development to be spread around the village rather than concentrated on large sites.

Additional comments indicate some concerns with the provision of public transport in some areas of the village and this could probably be a consideration when identifying likely development sites

The need to provide housing for young families and the elderly are identified as priorities with an emphatic preference for 3 bedroom houses and 2 bedroom houses or bungalows. Opinion on 4 bedroom houses is not strong, whilst there is little enthusiasm for flats. There is a perceived need for rental accommodation

There is general agreement that recreational and sporting facilities together with some environmental features should be provided. Business and employment opportunities were also acknowledged as needed to maintain the community with support for the development of small offices and light industry

The results of the survey give rise to a vision, supported by the majority of respondents, of a future thriving community in Cockfield based upon a realistic appraisal of what is required to maintain such a community and protect us from the type of rural decline which could result from a non pro-active approach to growth and development