

## MINUTES

of the Meeting of Occold Parish Council held at 8pm on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2010 in the Village Hall.

Present: Mr K Chittock, Mr R Burnett, Mr C Cripps, Mrs M Grange, Mr B Hull,  
Mr R Owen

Also PCSO Chris Bales for part of the meeting

### **1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

Mr Hewitson and Mr Miller were both unwell, Mr Hubner was abroad on business. County Councillor Andrew Stringer and District Councillor Charles Tilbury were also both unable to attend

### **2. Reports from County Councillor, District Councillor, Community Police Officer**

The Clerk read out the following reports: -

#### **2(1) County Councillor's report**

##### Gritting

It will be no surprise to anyone that the biggest issue at the moment is gritting of the road network, especially after the announcement that in an attempt to conserve stocks we would only grit Priority 1 routes. I have been receiving 3 updates per day on the number of runs the various teams are conducting.

The county council has now published on its website the link to the routes of the priority 1 and 2 routes which is as follows: -

[www.suffolk.gov.uk/TransportAndStreets/RoadMaintenance/RoadSaltingandSnowClearing](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/TransportAndStreets/RoadMaintenance/RoadSaltingandSnowClearing)  
and click on the Suffolk Elgin link half way down.

Salting routes are only visible when the map in Suffolk Elgin is set at the right zoom level.

- Click on Map Roadworks, then click on the downward arrow next to the words "zoom to".
- Select one of the options Postcode, street etc - this will open another box where you can enter the information required for the option you have selected.
- A new box will appear headed "Map Layers and Legends"- in the folder headed "Highway Network" click on salting routes.
- This will open another box showing Map Layer Information – click on the X in the top right corner to close this.
- The map will now display the gritting routes for roads maintained by the County council – those with purple lines are Priority 1 routes; those with green lines are Priority 2 routes.
- By clicking on the coloured line along the route another box will open giving the name salting priority.

One area that is not well known is that parish councils should have a list of volunteers to spread the grit that is tipped in small piles at key sites. This policy was formulated 2 decades ago and few parishes have records of it. This is just one of the areas that we need to review to make sure that as many services are accessible during a cold snap both by car as well as on foot.

As with any issue I would welcome any feedback regarding the gritting situation.

Councillors agreed that the issue of improved gritting should be looked into for the future. As areas of the village are not gritted some residents had asked the Clerk in th recent bad weather about having grit provided for areas such as Old Rectory Gardens and The Street/Redlingfield Road. There used to be several locations in the village where salt was left. Clerk to investigate if these are still provided, where they are, and how much grit bins would cost. Volunteers are needed to be responsible for them and for using the contents for

gritting when needed. Clerk to ask for volunteers in the next newsletter and on the website

## **2(2) District Councillor's report**

### Finance

The Council is aware that the outlook for government expenditure for the next few years is likely to be of the order of reductions of 15-20%, which MSDC has to take account of as it plans ahead. We shall do everything possible to avoid inappropriate use of reserves and unnecessary expenditure, while at the same time seeking to preserve frontline services. All areas will, however, have to justify their expenditure on an ongoing basis. On a positive note, however, we have finally been informed of a provisional allocation from the Housing Planning Delivery Grant for 2009/10, of £1,098,000. This is the highest allocation of all district and borough councils in Suffolk, and testifies to the hard work put in by the council's officers. It is especially encouraging in view of the fact that 5-6 years ago the planning department was not achieving the required standards, so that the decision to invest in order to remedy the situation has paid off. We have not yet been told of the split between capital and revenue, but if it is similar to the previous financial year, it would mean the General Fund would receive just under £750,000, compared with the figure we had budgeted of £500,000. The expected surplus would therefore offset the current forecast overspend on the General Fund budget, enabling us to put a small amount of money into reserve at the end of the year.

### Planning

Karen Bolton, who brings a wealth of experience, has replaced Chris Stathers as Enforcement Officer in the Planning Department.

### Recycling

Despite the recent bad weather, our contractor Serco has largely managed to keep on top of waste collection. Unfortunately, some collections were missed just before Christmas, due to copies of the Mid Suffolk Messenger either failing to reach householders in time to inform them that some collections would take place a day early (or else not being read?). The recycling rate is currently running at around 43%, although will drop slightly with the suspension of the garden waste service over the holiday period. The scheme now has 5,500 subscribers, and a new campaign in the spring will aim to encourage more householders to join. Our trade waste recycling service is gathering momentum, with more businesses signing up to our most cost-effective and efficient service. In March 8000 residents in Mid Suffolk will see their collection dates changed in order to rationalise the rounds and reduce mileage driven by the vehicle fleet. The Christmas tree collection service will take place on Monday January 11 with over 20 drop-off points in Mid Suffolk and Babergh. Residents will be asked to drop off their trees at designated sites during the previous weekend.

### Waste enforcement

Since Jan 2009 the waste enforcement team has investigated over 500 reported fly tips in the area. Nearly half proved to be "non-reportable", or relating to abandoned vehicles. Some 25 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued, with one refusal to pay, which resulted in a court appearance where the defendant was fined £100 plus £637 costs. In addition, offenders who are observed dropping litter continue to be dealt with firmly, with 13 incidents resulting in court appearances and tough penalties.

### Crime

Our Community Safety Officer has prepared a revised report on crime statistics, which confirms that Mid Suffolk remains one of the safest districts in the county, with the lowest recorded offences per 1000 residents. However, some specific attention is needed in three wards in order to reduce burglary, vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour.

### Ipswich Street redevelopment, Stowmarket

While a provisional date has been set for a public enquiry (in February) this is based on a few objections having been raised to various aspects. The Council is, however, confident, that it can resolve all outstanding objections, and thus remove the need for an enquiry (and the associated costs)

## **2(3) Community Police Officer's report**

### Reported Crimes

Since the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009, there have been no reported crimes In the Parish of Occold.

### Suffolk Police's top tips for winter driving:

*During wintry weather conditions:*

Ask yourself – is your journey essential?

Check the local and national weather forecasts.

Listen to local and national radio for travel information.

Tell someone at your destination what time you expect to arrive.

Adjust your driving to the conditions, as hail, heavy snow and rain reduce visibility.

Use dipped headlights and reduce your speed.

Dazzle from winter sun can be dangerous. Keep a pair of sunglasses handy and slow down.

Make sure you are equipped with warm clothes, food, boots and a torch. In snowy conditions, take a spade.

Clear your windows and mirrors before you set out and carry a screen scraper and de-icer. *Vehicle condition*

In winter it is even more important to check your vehicle is well maintained and serviced.

Keep the lights, windows and mirrors clean and free from ice and snow.

Keep your battery fully charged.

Add anti-freeze to the radiator and winter additive to the windscreen washer bottles.

Make sure wipers and lights are in good working order.

Check that tyres have plenty of tread depth and are maintained at the correct pressure.

### Vulnerable People

During the adverse weather, Suffolk County Council has set up a call centre for help for Vulnerable People on 0845 6037686 which will be staffed between 0900-2000 hours over the weekends.

### Suffolk Safe Key

We will remind you of the Suffolk Safe Key Scheme

By registering your key holder details the police will be able to save valuable time gaining access to your property should an incident occur whilst your property is left unattended. This service is currently offered at a discounted figure of £6.00 for one year.

### Crime Prevention

With the nights getting longer please be vigilant and secure your property, we recommend leaving alight on if you go out preferably on a timer or with a light sensor also leaving a radio playing on a speech channel will give the impression of the property being occupied. Alarms where fitted should be activated when the premises are empty and keys stored out of view.

Outbuildings and the surrounds of property are also vulnerable and it should be stressed that outbuildings should be fitted with an appropriate alarm.

### Have Your Say

The Neighbourhood Police Meeting is now open to the public please come along and raise any issues with us the next meeting is on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010, it starts at 7pm and finishes at 8pm and will take place at The Black Horse, The Street, Thorndon. IP23 7JR

### Quality of service

If you would like to tell us your views on the service that you have received from us or just to say how nice it is to see a Police Officer in your village, please let us know. We appreciate all feedback & comments from residents within our SNT area.

### Contact us

Tel: 01473 613500 & ask to speak to Chris Bales or any Debenham Officer

E-mail: [midsuffcentral.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:midsuffcentral.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk)

Website: [www.onesuffolk.co.uk/safersuffolk/midsuffolkcentral](http://www.onesuffolk.co.uk/safersuffolk/midsuffolkcentral) - please visit our website which is updated regularly.

When PCSO Bales arrived at the meeting later he reiterated the points about crime prevention, giving

examples of recent crimes in Crowfield which had been carried out over a short period of time. The first of these was the theft of an unlocked car which had the keys left in it and the police believe that the same perpetrators returned to the area encouraged by their earlier success to commit several other offences. He emphasized the need to pay attention to personal security even in a village like Occold which has a virtually zero crime rate to avoid similar repeat crimes

**3. Minutes of the previous Meeting** held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2009, which had previously been circulated to Councillors, were approved

#### **4. Matters Arising**

##### **4(1) Item 4(1) 7.12.09: Bus stop**

An extra-ordinary meeting had been held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December to confirm that the money for felling the trees on the green would be in addition to the £1000 road safety fund allocated to the project, and not part of that money. Those present were Mr Hubner, Mrs Grange, Mr Cripps, Mr Chittock and Mr Hewitson

Paul Horne at SCC had submitted a request for funding from the Locality Board Quality of Life budget on our behalf, although nothing had been heard from that yet. Clerk to follow-up. He had confirmed that a narrower hard standing on the verge outside The Beeches should be possible but would result in a small step off the back of about 20mm. The application form for the bus shelter had been sent in. A letter had been obtained from ORAC confirming that the committee is happy for the Parish Council to remove the trees necessary to make space for the bus stop. Quotes had been obtained for the removal of the trees from three different contractors (see Finance 8(2) below). It was agreed that provided the money came through from the Locality Board the tree felling could go ahead. The Clerk was asked to keep ORAC informed of progress with the project – there was to be a meeting the next evening

##### **4(2) Item 5(1) 7.12.09: Correspondence for circulation**

It was agreed that the photographic survey should be passed to Barry Woods to put the pictures on the website. Councillors had been contacted by Andy Andrews about the possibility of having a village archive (Clerk had not received the email – sent to old address?) Clerk was asked to find out what happened to the framed pictures of the village that had been in the old village hall

#### **5. Correspondence**

**5(1) Correspondence for circulation – *The Local Councillor* Issue 4 2009; results of the annual SALC survey 2008/9; letter from Boundary Committee and summary of its report to the Secretary of State; *Suffolk View* Winter 2009**

**5(2) Local Flooding Survey from Suffolk County Council.** Several locations in the village that are prone to flooding in very heavy rain were identified. Clerk to complete form as best she can (dates not known in most cases)

#### **6. Parish Paths Partnership**

**6(1) The broken signpost for The Causeway had not been repaired yet. Clerk to follow up**

#### **7. Meetings and Training**

**7(1) Clerk had details from SALC of forthcoming Councillor courses**

**7(2) Mr Hull reported that a meeting had been held between himself, Mr Hewitson and the Clerk to carry out the Clerk's appraisal. The appraisal had found the Clerk's work to be entirely satisfactory; however several issues had arisen regarding possible improvements in procedure. It was suggested that Councillors be copied with substantive letters and emails sent out by the Clerk, perhaps when the Agenda and Minutes are sent out. It was**

also suggested that when instructing the Clerk to send a letter, especially after a long and involved discussion, the points to be made in that letter be clearly stated by the Council. Finally, to ensure that items for discussion are included in the Agenda in time the Clerk to send a reminder to Councillors a few days before she needs to prepare the Agenda for distribution

## **8. Finance**

**8(1)** The 2009/10 Budget and Expenditure figures were reviewed. It was decided to include £750 towards the cost of replacing a further street lighting unit if the need arose due to G39 compliance issues. After some discussion the following Budget for 2010/11 was agreed: -

Administration	£3000
Training	£ 200
Chairman's allowance	£ 50
S137 Donations	£ 400
Church & Chapel	£1000
Cemetery grasscutting	£ 700
Water rate	£ 100
Street Lights	£1500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£6950</b>

It was also agreed that the whole amount should be precepted for

**8(2)** Quotes for removal of the trees on the green had been received. Suffolk County Council contractors would charge an estimated £1030, Waveney Tree Specialists had quoted £200 + VAT and Danarbor £400 + VAT. It was agreed to use Waveney Tree Specialists. Mr Hull to liaise with them about starting work once confirmation of funding had been received

**8(3)** It was noted that £26.70 had been received from Mid Suffolk District Council for delivery of the Mid Suffolk Messenger. Reimbursement of £15 to the Clerk for the payment made to Lewis Bloomfield to carry out delivery was approved

**8(4)** It was noted that a cheque for £83.10 had been received from Henman's charity. The Chairman suggested that some thought should be given to allocating this annual payment to a specific project in future

**8(5)** The charitable donations to be made in the current financial year were considered. After discussion it was decided to make the following payments: -

Age Concern Suffolk	£40
East Anglian Children's Hospice	£40
Marie Curie Cancer Care	£40
Mid Suffolk Citizen's Advice Bureau	£40
Macmillan Cancer Support Suffolk	£40
Eye & District Volunteer Centre	£40
Suffolk Accident Rescue Service	£40
East Anglian Air Ambulance	£40
Occold Pre-School	£60

**9. Date of next meeting** is Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at 8pm in the Village Hall.

Dates of meetings for the rest of the year were discussed and the following chosen subject to confirmation of booking the Village Hall: -

8th March  
12th April  
10th May (hall unavailable)  
7th June  
5th July

13th September (hall unavailable?)  
11th October  
8th November  
6th December

Meeting closed 10pm