

## MINUTES

of the Meeting of Occold Parish Council held at 8pm on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009 in the Village Hall.

Present: Mr K Chittock, Mr R Burnett, Mr C Cripps, Mr J Hewitson,  
Mr S Hubner, Mr A Miller

Also District Councillor Charles Tilbury, County Councillor Andrew Stringer, PCSO Emma Cowell (each for part of the meeting), Di Noller from ORAC and Mr Bernard Dyla

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

Apologies had been received from Mr Hull and Mr Owen

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

2(1) PCSO Emma Cowell gave her report to the meeting: -

#### 1. Reported Crimes

Since the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009, there have been no reported crimes.

#### 2. Suffolk SAFEKey

Suffolk SAFEKey is an improved keyholder service set up by Suffolk Constabulary, which is available to all business and residential properties in Suffolk whether they are fitted with an alarm or not

Signing up for the service means Suffolk Constabulary has quick access to your keyholder(s) details should the police need to gain access to your property in an emergency while you are away

Your keyholder is someone you can trust, who lives in close vicinity to your property and will have access to it when you are absent

Having the names of nominated keyholders proves particularly useful in situations including, when you are on holiday or if you are unable to speak for yourself, maybe as the result of an injury

Please visit [www.suffolk.safekey.org.uk](http://www.suffolk.safekey.org.uk) for more information or Telephone: **08444 121 802** for more information about the scheme.

#### 3. Team News

I will be leaving the Mid Suffolk Central Team. I will be moving to Stowmarket SNT at the end of December/beginning of January. I am going to be the new School Safety Officer for Stowmarket High School & Stowupland High School & will be based at the schools. I am sad to be leaving my villages & all the residents, but I am very excited at the possibilities the new role will bring. Until a new officer is recruited PCSO Chris Bales will be looking after my parishes

#### 4. Events in Occold

If you have any upcoming events (eg. Litter Pick, Fun runs, Discos) in Occold, please let us know

2(2) District Councillor Tilbury gave his report to the meeting: -

1. 2010/11 budget

Work has commenced on the budget for next year. Initial indications are that some tough decisions may have to be made to balance next year's budget. As proposals are developed, parish and town councils will be contacted and asked for their views as part of the consultation process. This is likely to include questions relating to services which may represent lower priorities, and which might therefore be cut. An example might be pest control, where income is expected to be below target in the current year, although the service will continue to be provided for at least another six months, whilst aiming to maximise income through advertising and seeking commercial contracts. Another area is likely to be car parking, where the Council will embark on consultation regarding an increase in charges from next April (which would be the first for six years). But in considering such a step the Council is conscious of the need to strike a balance between supporting the regeneration of Stowmarket and responsible financial management.

2. Impact event, Stowmarket

This took place, unannounced, on Thursday September 24, and concentrated on two residential areas of Stowmarket, starting with a multi-agency checkpoint team, including a Road Policing Unit, Trading Standards and HM Revenue and Customs. In approximately seven hours the team stopped 32 vehicles, of which 27 were found to be breaking the law in some way. Two were summoned to court, 13 were issued with delayed prohibition notices, and one vehicle was removed for the road on account of steering defects, while another was summonsed for dangerous conditions and tachograph offences. Several endorsable fixed penalty notices were issued. Then from midday two pedestrian teams began to patrol, consisting of Environmental Health and Housing Officers, the Safer Neighbourhood team, SCC Education Welfare, and Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service, the Police Authority and Community Safety Officers. The results included 34 students stopped on their lunch breaks, none of whom had lunch passes and who were therefore followed up at school the next day. Advice was given to 49 households in respect of home fire safety checks. 21 abandoned Asda trolleys and 21 items of bulky rubbish were removed (including a dead snake).

3. Planning

The number of planning applications continues to increase but, despite the lower staff numbers (as a result of cost-cutting: see above), turnover of cases continues to be well above target. A replacement for Chris Stathers, who leaves on November 22, is currently being sought in the Enforcement department.

The Enforcement department has been working in conjunction with Economic Development, Waste Services and SCC Highways in order to remove the clutter of unauthorised advertisements in the countryside. I have reported the clearly illegal advertisements (along the A140 and elsewhere) relating to the Greenacres park home site at Blacksmiths Green near Wetherup Street and have been assured that action will shortly be taken to remove them.

#### 4. Trade Waste

The new service is gaining momentum with some of our earlier trade contacts coming to the end of their contracts with our competitors, and now able to sign up to our service. We continue to offer a personal service when required on pricing and bin requirements, encouraging our customers to recycle as much as possible, thus reducing the refuse going to landfill.

2(3) County Councillor Stringer gave his report to the meeting: -

##### 1. Green Bike Project

The Green Bike Project will take unwanted bicycles from landfill and other sources and train people with learning disabilities to repair and refurbish these machines and put them to community use in a variety of ways. The aims of this project are to offer “pool bike” schemes for local businesses in order to improve the health of work forces and remove cars from our roads. The project also offers training for groups and individuals to be safe on the road as well as offering maintenance service and advice

All of this is arranged by Genesis Orwell Mencap.

Anyone needing further details can contact Genesis Orwell Mencap on 01473 723888

##### 2. B1115 Stowmarket Relief Road

Anyone travelling through Stowmarket recently cannot have failed to notice the new bridge coming on at a pace; the work is due to finish on this long awaited facility in June 2010. One aspect not widely known is that the bridge parapets will contain images of the industrial past and present of Stowmarket shot blasted onto them.

##### 3. Section 106 Agreement monies

The media has made much of the sums of monies that both County and District councils hold to bring forward community benefits from developments. The amount of time that councils have to hold this money can be protracted as the timing of developments especially now is difficult to predict. For instance the County Council holds £7 million from Cedars Park to pay for the bridge in Stowmarket, which was triggered by the sale of the 600th house, and the project is now being built but the final invoice has not yet been paid. This is just one example of how councils find they are holding on to substantial sums of monies in the public interest.

The quote from a county councillor that we are “scratching our heads” to find projects on which to spend this money is just wrong, and if any Councillor has access to money that they don’t know what to do with, I am sure we can help them out.

##### 4. Integrated Risk Management Policy Councillor Working Group

I have just had my first meeting of this group and found out what this ridiculous title means. The group is responsible for the management plan for the Fire and Rescue Service and will consult with the service and the public on improving this vital service.

One interesting fact to come out at the meeting was that the fire and rescue service do not have a statutory duty to pump out flooded property or remove pets from trees and up until a few years ago attend a road traffic accident.

**3. Minutes of the previous Meeting** held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009, which had previously been circulated to Councillors, were unanimously approved

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

**4(1) Item 4(1) 12.10.09: Bus Stop**

The Clerk reported the following: -

(i) The Locality Budget Officer at Suffolk County Council had confirmed that the £1000 from the late Councillor Clover's Locality Budget would remain available until the end of the current financial year, that is until the end of March 2010

(ii) BT had reported that 19 calls had been made from the phone box in the past year.

Despite its low usage, however, it would not be possible to remove it as Ofcom regulations require the retention of some telephone boxes for emergency purposes

(iii) Mid Suffolk District Council's Tree Officer, David Mitchell, had confirmed that there was no tree preservation order on the two trees to the left of the phone box, and although the preferred option would be to keep the living tree if possible he did not believe that the project should be dropped because of its presence. He recommended removal of the dead elm before it became dangerous

(iv) Some alternative shelter designs were looked at. The cheapest price for a simple wooden shelter was currently £4280, some £2000 more than the standard design provided by SCC. The feeling was that the additional cost was too great and that the standard design would be acceptable, especially if it could be placed discreetly on the green, to the left of the phone box

(v) It was not stated in the SCC application pack that Parish Councils are expected to pay a minimum proportion of the cost of a bus shelter project, but simply have to state what funds they have available to contribute to it. However, it was understood that the Parish Council would have to bear the full cost of an alternative shelter design. Occold Parish Council currently has £1000 from the Locality Budget and £1000 Road Safety reserves to allocate to this project

(vi) The question of whether planning permission would be needed was raised. This would be the case if the green falls within a Conservation Area. Clerk to check the extent of any Conservation Areas in the village

It was resolved that a site meeting should be arranged with Paul Horne from SCC so that he can make a definitive measurement of the land between the phone box and the fence to confirm that a stop can be constructed there. Councillors to attend and ORAC to be invited

**4(2) Item 4(2) 12.10.09: Gravel on Highway**

Gerald Clarke from SCC had been to look at the gravel again and would have it cleared up and speak to the residents concerned

**4(3) Item 4(3) 12.10.09: Vacancy for a Councillor**

Mrs Michelle Grange had put her name forward as a candidate for the vacancy. The Clerk read out a letter from her. All were in favour of co-opting her to the Parish Council. Clerk to send the necessary paperwork to her and notify Mid Suffolk District Council

#### **5. Parish Paths Partnership**

**5(1)** It was reported that the Public Footpath sign at the entrance to The Causeway had

been broken. Clerk to report to ROW Office

## **6. Planning Matters**

**6(1)** It was noted that the Proposed Submission Document for the Stowmarket Area Action Plan Development Plan Document has been published. Comments to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009. The document can be accessed via the Mid Suffolk District Council website [www.midsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk) or viewed at Mid Suffolk libraries (including Debenham, Eye)

## **7. Finance**

**7(1)** The introduction of an appraisal procedure for the Parish Clerk was considered. A job description and suggested format for an appraisal form were supplied. Mr Hull had volunteered to be involved with this and Mr Hewitson also offered to help. To report back at December meeting

**7(2)** With regard to the amended Assets Register the Clerk had been unable to find any record in the accounts of money paid for the Village Sign, except for a small amount for the oak post and a sum to a local builder, presumably to build the brick plinth. It was thought that it may have been a gift, but no-one at the meeting could be sure. Clerk to ask Mr Hull and Mr Owen if they recollect. To be brought to next meeting

**7(3)** It was noted that requests for donations had been received from Ipswich and East Suffolk Headway charity and the Eye Volunteer Centre. Clerk to send usual acknowledgements

**7(4)** Councillors approved a cheque to the British Legion for £25 as a donation for the Poppy Wreath

## **8. Matters to be advised (at the Chairman's discretion)**

**8(1)** Items to be taken to the Village Forum meeting in February to be considered at the December meeting

**8(2)** The Parish Council notice board needs oiling – perhaps in the spring

**8(3)** The pub has still not been sold, although there were reports that the Agent is hopeful that an interested buyer may have been found

**9. Date of next meeting** is Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2009 at 8pm in the Village Hall

Meeting closed 9.10pm