

Minutes of Withersfield Parish Council meeting held at 7:30pm on Tuesday, 1st October 2019 in Withersfield Village Hall

Present: Cllrs - Ian Kinloch (Vice Chair); Frank Eve; Peter Lord, Sam Molyneux-Summers; Clerk - Laura Crump.

The meeting was chaired by Vice Chair, Cllr Kinloch.

1. Apologies for absence

Received from District Councillor, Peter Stevens; Chairman, Terry Rich; and Councillor, Jill Johnson.

2. District Councillor's report

None submitted.

3. County Councillor's report

Cllr Evans covered the following points:

- Cllr Evans and Cllr Eve recently had a meeting with the haulage company that has lorries driving through Withersfield village. It was agreed that the lorries should not drive through the village and the drivers will be instructed not to do so. They will only come through if completely necessary - such as a visit within the village - and would give prior notice of this to the Clerk.
- There will be a meeting for local parishes with the Rural Crime Police on 14th October in Stansfield village hall.
- It is usual to see a spike in burglary when the clocks go back in October, as the lack of lighting within the home shows there is no one there. Please bear this in mind to try and prevent your home looking vacant.
- There have been just 3 speed tickets issued in the last 6 months – however this could be due to this being executed at the wrong time of day.
- Cllr Evans had tried to get an ANPR up all the time but the police were not keen.
- Suffolk Safeguarding team were recently rated as 'outstanding'.
- Grand mentoring scheme; information and success – this is where a young person has a voluntary mentor to help them when starting out on their own into the world, as young adults.
- There have been 2 drug hauls found at Felixstowe – one of which was the biggest ever found to date in Britain.

- Highways Suffolk – signage for road closures are to include more specific information, such as, the particular road names involved and timescales. The traffic lights used for temporary road works now have to have a certain tag on them to confirm they were fully charged before going out to location for use on the road, in order to work more effectively.
- Care Quality Commission have rated Suffolk 5th in the country out of all local health and social care authorities (there are over 300 homes in Suffolk).

Cllr Eve queried the timescale for the technical report for the traffic order in which Cllr Evans ensured she would follow up and intends to get a proper breakdown of costs for the PC.

4. Public Forum for parishioners

Unfortunately, J.A.P Architects were unable to attend to discuss their initial proposals for a development of houses on the site of Milton House. We hope they can attend our next meeting.

Andrew Anderson from Jaynic and Paul Sutton from Strutt & Parker attended to answer any queries on the planning of 155 dwellings on the land west of Three Counties Way. Some parishioners expressed their disappointment in the site becoming housing now instead of originally being an employment site. Andrew Anderson explained that the original vision was for it to be an employment site but there was little interest in the site for B1 use. The planning policy does allow for an alternative proposal. A lot of money has gone towards marketing and site management over the time, and they feel 9 years is long enough to market the site. They are themselves disappointed the demand wasn't there as they would earn more from the site for the desired commercial use, rather than the now to be, residential use. It was explained that only 2 of the plots are now to be used for residential, and that the 2 plots at the front, near to The Spirit of Enterprise roundabout, were to remain as employment sites where an innovation centre is to be placed. Parishioners were surprised in the lack of commercial interest and asked what benefits would this change now bring to the parish of Withersfield. The benefits included the implementation of a large play area on the arboretum site, 30% affordable housing and pledges for the traffic calming scheme in Withersfield. Parishioners were also concerned about the change of traffic for Three Counties Way and the adjoining A1307 road, however, the highway impact assessment stated that there would be 66% less traffic for residential than employment.

Parishioners queried over the way in which the Parish Council consider planning applications and would possibly like to know more about the decision-making process.

Cllr Kinloch explained the PC do not have a formal procedure for this but if we were informed by a neighbourhood plan, we would have something to work to. He also added that the PC are to look at planning objectively and ensure that it does not contradict rules from West Suffolk Council and the government. The PC can only represent the views which they know about so urge parishioners to inform the PC of their opinions.

Cllr Eve made the point that the PC do not make the decision as to whether planning applications get approved or not. The PC take parishioners' views seriously and do indeed

object if guidelines are not being followed. Assistance in this area is welcomed from parishioners for the Cllrs.

A parishioner suggested the PC having a checklist to work to, of items to consider, when contemplating responses to planning applications.

Cllr Kinloch ensured that the PC would have a discussion about the process used for considering planning applications.

A parishioner expressed her concerns about drug dealings that are happening in the area. Cllr Kinloch and Cllr Evans asked for a synopsis to be emailed to them about this so that it can be dealt with in the correct manner.

A parishioner raised concerns about the proposed development at Milton House changing the shape and character of the village. Cllr Kinloch confirmed the PC will consider this when planning has been received, as this is when the PC will be asked to give their comments. The PC defer to comment for the time being against the Milton House development until we are able to find out more information about the plans from the architects.

Cllr Kinloch informed the parishioners that the meeting for developing the Neighbourhood Plan is on 22nd October at the village hall.

A parishioner brought the Lilley Barn planning application to discussion to explain her issues with the proposal. The main problem being the access to the planning site, which can only be obtained across her driveway. The parishioner wanted to know whether the PC will make comment on the planning application.

Cllrs explained how the PC would not be able to object to the planning on these grounds. The PC confirmed they would look at the application objectively and would consider and discuss their response later on in the meeting, bearing the parishioner's comments in mind.

Cllr Kinloch concluded that the PC try hard to be objective and fair when considering and deciding on issues, and requested that parishioners make their views known to inform the PC. Additionally, they should advise on any actual or perceived criminal activity.

Vice Chair closed the public section of the meeting. Parishioners left at 8:50pm.

5. Co-option of new councillor

The former Cllr who previously expressed their interest in the role, sent through their letter which outlined their reasoning for wanting to join the PC and stated what relevant skills and experience he has to fulfil the position effectively.

Cllrs discussed the applicant and feel positive from reading his background and comments for wishing to join the PC once again. Cllrs felt inclined to accept but were hesitant to do so as they would prefer to meet with the applicant in person in the first instance. The PC felt it was a shame he failed to attend the meeting which raised concerns to whether the commitment would be too great for him. Prior notification of absence is expected from a Cllr for the PC meetings, as attendance is compulsory.

It was proposed by Cllr Kinloch and seconded by Cllr Lord, to defer the applicant's acceptance into the Parish Council until the next PC meeting where hopefully the applicant would attend. All Cllrs were in agreement.

6. Declaration of members' interests for any agenda item at this meeting

None.

7. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 16th July

The Parish Council meeting minutes were approved - proposed by Cllr Kinloch and seconded by Cllr Lord.

8. Matters arising - update from previous Parish Council meeting

a) Progress towards Neighbourhood Plan.

Meeting has been arranged for all interested in developing the neighbourhood plan - 7pm Tuesday 22nd October in the village hall. We have a senior planning officer from West Suffolk Council attending to give a short presentation of how neighbourhood plans work and information on the grant application process for Parish Councils. There will be a chance for questions and discussion.

b) Village Hall Management Committee - update from Cllr Kinloch on his meeting with the chair of the VHMC

Cllr Kinloch updated the PC on his meeting with the Chair of the Village hall Management Committee where he put across the PC's concerns. In light of their discussions, moving forward the Chair has promised to approach the architects in order to gain some quotes for the long-anticipated village hall extension and to re-introduce quarterly VHMC meetings.

Cllr Kinloch is to contact the Chair again to find out what progress has been made.

c) Update on 'Support for village halls in West Suffolk' (Jamie Murphy email) – Cllr Molyneux-Summers

Cllr Molyneux-Summers moved forward with the audit application process and came to a point where he needed certain information from the Chair of the VHMC. The information was passed over to the Chair for completion, so the audit could then be executed.

Cllr Molyneux-Summers has not yet had an update from the Chair of the VHMC on the matter and so, will chase up for any news.

d) Update on the implementation of new waste bins

Clerk informed the PC that the 3 bins have been ordered however, West Suffolk Council is currently waiting for the new stock to arrive – they are due in the next few weeks. West Suffolk Council will place the requested bin for the recreational ground, near to the barrier, as it has been deemed that this will be more efficient for the emptying process.

9. To receive an update from the Traffic Working Group and for the speed reduction fund

Cllr Eve gave an update. He has given the go ahead to David Chenery for the technical report which is the first step towards the traffic calming measures. Cllr Evans has paid for the technical report and so, we are now awaiting the completion of this. Cllr Eve has received rough estimates for the costs of the buffer zones, though believes we are in need of a better breakdown of the costs, which Cllr Evans is going to pursue. Cllr Eve intends to hold another Traffic Working Group meeting soon.

10. To receive an update on the activity of Suffolk Accident Rescue Service (SARS) and consider the request for a donation

The contents of the report were noted and based on these, it was proposed by Cllr Lord and seconded by Cllr Kinloch, that a donation of £100 should be made. All Cllrs were in favour.

11. Order of wreath and arrangements for attendance at Remembrance Sunday gathering at war memorial

The various options of wreaths available from the Royal British Legion were considered and all Cllrs were in favour of ordering wreath F. Clerk to pursue the order.

12. Finance

- a) Presentation of monthly accounts – Income and Expenditure and Bank Reconciliation

Noted. Proposed by Cllr Molyneux-Summers and seconded by Cllr Lord.

- b) To note payments made since last meeting

Noted. Proposed by Cllr Molyneux-Summer and seconded by Cllr Lord.

13. Correspondence

- a) Email – Defib Site Check

Noted.

- b) Email - Objection to planning DC/19/1675/OUT

Noted and discussed.

- c) Email - Website accessibility - bitesize training. L09-18 The public sector bodies accessibility regulations 2018

Noted and discussed. Cllr Lord to investigate further into this.

- d) Email - SALC Review of governance arrangements and constitution

Noted.

- e) The Flying Shuttle – possible contribution towards implementing a defibrillator

Clerk contacted The Flying Shuttle to discuss the PC potentially contributing towards their intention to implement a defibrillator at the pub. As there was no reply, Cllr Molyneux-Summers will inquire further.

- f) Email – Have your say on division arrangements for Suffolk County Council

Noted.

14. Planning

- a) Borough notifications since last meeting:

Noted.

- b) Applications received since last meeting:

All applications noted.

DC/19/1675/OUT:

Councillors discussed the application, considering parishioners' views and reasons which led to their objections. The Council concluded they are unaware of any grounds in which they can object against the planning. It was proposed by Cllr Kinloch and seconded by Cllr Eve that the Parish Council's response should be as follows:

"The Council are unaware of any grounds in which they can object against to this planning application, all the while noting and appreciating that objections have been raised by residents adjacent and sharing an access, which is disputed and deemed to be a breach of covenant."

DC/19/1711/OUT:

The PC discussed this application and thought the lack of planning signage at site is a concern. It was proposed by Cllr Kinloch and seconded by Cllr Eve that the Parish Council's response should be as follows:

"The Parish Council regrets that the original plan to develop a research park and employment appears to have been abandoned. However, the alternative of light industrial development would have been unwelcome. So, we consider housing to be preferable if it meets the following conditions:

The density is not too high, adequate parking spaces are provided, there is a mix including affordable and social housing for young families, the environmental aspects are of a high standard and cater for the needs of families, there are additional speed restrictions on the roads approaching the development and within it, overlooking of existing properties is considered, and the developers enter into section 106 commitments to contribute

towards essential local facilities - health, education, leisure and traffic management issues.”

15. Agenda items for meeting to be held on Tuesday, 19th November 2019

- Graveyard
- To discuss the PC's approach for commenting on planning applications, in order to ensure transparency.

The meeting closed at 9:46pm.