

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) of Wortham & Burgate held 5th April 2016 at 7.00pm in Wortham Village Hall

Council members present: Cllrs S Rash, J Bradley, C Williams, J Piper, B Cole , P Burd, M Odams, M Breen , C Grocott
County Cllr. J Fleming, Cllr D Kearsley, 3 members of the general public & N Verkroost (Clerk to the Council)

1. **Welcome by the Chair of the Parish Council** – The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting
2. **Apologies for absences:** None
3. **To receive an annual report from the County Councillor, Jessica Fleming** – County Councillor Jessica Fleming summarised her report to those present at the meeting; full details can be located at Appendix A. Jessica was thanked for her report.
4. **To receive an annual report from the District Councillor, Diana Kearsley** – District Councillor Diana Kearsley summarised her report to those present at the meeting. For the full report see Appendix B . Diana was also thanked for her report.
5. **To receive an annual report from the Mid Suffolk North Safer Neighbourhood Team** –no report
6. **To receive an annual report from the Chair of the Parish Council** –Full details can be located at Appendix C.
7. **To receive a report from Better Broadband Suffolk:** Jonathan Chown from Better Broadband Suffolk is to arrange to attend a PC Meeting later in the Year to present an update.
8. **To receive reports from local groups and organisations: To consider matters pertaining to:**
 - a. **The Parish of Wortham**

Community Action Group - Terry Quinn reported that funds are required to produce the Welcome Pack for new residents and the group requested that a donation could be made from the Parish Council. This pack is given free of charge to new residents and is much appreciated by all those who receive it.

WLTC – Another successful year for Wortham Tennis Club. The completion of the 4th Court Project opened by LTA President Cathie Sabin. The club was also awarded Suffolk Sports – Sports Club of the Year, Suffolk LTA – Tennis Club of the Year and Chair Julia Waters was award Volunteer of the Year. The Club has a healthy membership of over 260 adult and junior members with coaching, social play and competitive teams.

Wortham & Burgate Twinning Association – The association has a growing membership but still looking to attract more families with children wishing to form links with French families. There was a successful visit to Hede in 2015 , social events in Wortham and good contacts with local schools. There are also informal French conversation groups for those of different levels to improve.

A request was made by a resident to post a list of Parish Council Meetings dates on the Notice Board at the Village Hall.
 - b. **The Parish of Burgate - None**

11. Meeting closed at 7.38pm

Appendix A

Annual Report for Wortham & Burgate Parish Council – April 2016-05-16



By County Councillor Jessica Fleming, Hartismere Division, Suffolk

Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07714-597980 Twitter: @jesstfleming

Over the past year Suffolk County Council has responded to reduced central government funding by continuing to trim its budget, make changes to local services and engage with the devolution project. For example, the County has proposed changes to the fire and rescue services, has re-tendered the community transport contracts and reduced subsidies to Districts for collecting green waste. Almost all services have seen reduced budgets and in most cases this has resulted in better organisation and delivery.

The Environment and Sizewell C: As member responsible for 'Creating the Greenest County' I have been working behind the scenes to raise environmental awareness within County Council procurement, policy making and strategic planning. I sit on the Joint Local Authority Group (JLAG) responsible for preparing for Sizewell C construction - the Phase 2 consultation is expected to take place this summer when details of the proposals will be set out. Recent news about uncertainty over the Hinckley Point nuclear project and EDF's commitment has implications for Sizewell but we are being reassured that these projects will be confirmed in the near future.

Infrastructure and Schools: As a member of both the County and Mid Suffolk District planning committees I am very aware of the pressing need for investment in schools and bold local transport projects. Lobbying by councillors and MPs is starting to be noticed and the per-pupil funding for Suffolk schools has started to increase as a result. However there is much work to be done to secure the space and conditions for schools to thrive.

Roads: Last year Suffolk County Council installed the 20's Plenty scheme signs on the A143 adjacent to the school, more work is planned on this stretch of road in the near future to remove the islands and add road markings and calming measures.

Railways: Plans to improve speed and frequency on the Norwich to London line are progressing, but a bit more slowly than anticipated. Network Rail has prepared a Level Crossing Reduction Strategy for East Anglia which is likely to recommend closing or modifying some highway, rights-of-way and agricultural crossings. It is expected to be ready for review in April and I will keep affected parishes informed. I attended the Anglia Rail Conference just before Christmas about the new franchise to replace Abellio's contract later this year, the tender includes a requirement for some trains to make the journey from Norwich to London (and the reverse) in 90 minutes as well as additional freight capacity and better east – west linkages.

Devolution: Devolution proposals have been under discussion since July 2015 and important decisions may be made about the future of local government in East Anglia; a combined authority (the 'Eastern Powerhouse') is envisioned which may include Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire (although the latter has most recently opted out of the deal)

and an elected mayor. There would be full public consultation once a firm proposal is available. The project is at early stages and would need ratification by all participating local authorities to go ahead.

The EU Referendum will take place on Thursday 23 June 2016. The deadline for registering to vote is midnight on Tuesday 7 June 2016. This is perhaps the most important question put to the electorate for a long time and it is right that voters take this responsibility seriously and become as informed as possible. The following link leads to some background and text of the Treaty of Lisbon and thus about the EU <http://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/understanding-the-lisbon-treaty> Plans for further progress towards European unity (beyond the Lisbon Treaty) are described in the Five Presidents' Report: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5240_en.htm

Please get in touch with me about any issues that are of concern or about which you would like to know more.

Appendix B District Councillors' Report

April 2016

Annual Parish Meeting – Wortham and Burgate

1) Economy & Organisational

Last year I reported about ongoing work to develop a Joint Strategic Plan for the years 2014 – 2019. During 2015 a number of changes were announced as a result of the DCs elections during May and National Government. The Joint Strategic Plan is now being refreshed as the two new administrations wanted to review and update the strategies, in light of local, regional and national factors that changed since the original Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) was developed in 2013/14. A focused management review has been undertaken to ensure that we make the best use of our resources and direct them to the activities and interventions needed to secure delivery of our new Strategic Plan and this sets out how the Councils aim to provide services to deliver positive, sustainable change in our individual and business communities over the next five years.

Capital Investment Strategy – In July, both Councils approved a plan to invest the Councils' cash and capital resources to generate revenue income, achieve an increase in capital value in the longer term and stimulate local economic growth.

Devolution – Initial discussions started in August 2015 between Suffolk and Norfolk Councils to determine the viability of Devolution, followed by weeks of negotiation between Government, local councils and LEPs, a deal worth over £1bn for East Anglia was announced in the budget on the 16th March by George Osborne MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer. As part of the deal East Anglia would receive:

- £900m (£30m a year for the next 30 years) to invest in infrastructure
- £175m to invest in housing

The 'deal', which sets out a fundamentally different relationship between Government and local public services, was negotiated by Leaders from councils across Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and the New Anglia and Greater Cambridgeshire and Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnerships. However a tremendous amount of work will be carried out in future months, together with public consultations, it is important to note, this is not a 'done deal' - it will require ratification by each of the local councils and the LEP boards. The 'deal' will finally create a Combined Authority and a directly elected Mayor; it is proposed that the first mayoral elections could be in May 2017 alongside county council elections.

2016/17 Council budgets see small Council Tax rises – announcements have been distributed giving the revised Council Tax for 2016/2017 and Mid Suffolk have increased this by 6p per week, £2.97 per annum for a band 'D' property which is equivalent to 1.9%.

2) Housing

New Homes – as part of the Capital Investment Strategy, MSDC secured planning consent to build 38 new council homes supported by Homes and Communities Agency grant funding. These are the first houses to be built in a generation and will be completed by the end of 2016/17.

Decent Homes Standard - A targeted campaign was launched to encourage landlords and homeowners to take up grants and loans to bring their homes up to the Decent Home Standard – this was possible and made available under the Housing Renewal Policy approved by both councils in February 2015.

Empty Homes - The work being carried out by the private sector housing team to return empty homes to occupation has now expanded and includes empty commercial buildings. This work involves a great deal of legal work and when these empty homes are released will help towards the housing and business property shortfall.

Trusted Partner Pilot - Babergh and Mid Suffolk have been chosen by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to participate in a Trusted Partner pilot scheme to identify tenants who may struggle to pay their rent, following the introduction of Universal Credit. The pilot will allow us to make appropriate recommendations for a payment of housing costs direct to the landlord, (known as an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA)). The pilot scheme will last between six and nine months and was started in January 2016.

Help to Buy – during this year we were able to announce that council tenants who want to buy their own homes can apply for a £20k grant to help them onto the property ladder. This was made possible due to a successful application for funding from the Government's £84m Right-To-Buy social Mobility Fund, launched in 2015. The Right to Buy receipts during 2015/16 will acquire 4 properties with a further 6 in the pipeline. A total of £1,580,495 of RTB receipts committed.

Sheltered Housing Review - It has been some five years since this service was last reviewed. People are living longer and the service we offer should meet the needs of residents now and in the future, whilst also providing value for money. As part of the review, MSDC consulted residents to get their views on the service, what they like, what they don't like, what we could do better etc. A series of 25 separate tenant involvement events were held in 2015 with our Sheltered Residents at 22 different locations across the two districts.

3) Growth/Business

CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) - In January both councils voted to adopt CIL charging in the districts. Charging will start on 11th April meaning that any planning permission granted on or after this date may be liable to pay CIL. The Infrastructure Team will be providing further information over the coming months at Parish Liaison meetings, with details on what CIL charging means for communities and how you can take advantage of the opportunities it presents.

Neighbourhood Plan – During the past couple of years, 15 parishes across Babergh and Mid Suffolk have expressed interest in developing neighbourhood plans. The purpose of the plan is to determine how they view the growth of their neighbourhood to meet the need for economic growth and provide a future for next generations.

Joint Local Plan – Currently Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils have separate policies and are seeking to develop a Joint Local Plan. Work began this year through a new ‘cluster’ scheme, to see how the district wide housing targets will be considered at a local level. This includes a conversation about the impact of growth on infrastructure, facilities and the service improvement opportunities. There will be an ongoing dialogue with Councillors and the wider community as the plan progresses.

Planning - The Development Management team has changed and is now made up by three officer teams to serve specific areas within both Babergh and Mid Suffolk. The teams will establish improved local connections in the areas they cover with the support of their dedicated officers. A new fourth ‘start up’ team has been formed to ensure faster registering and validation of applications and enquiries. This is one of a number of planned improvements for Development Management in the next year to ensure clear routes of communication for consultees, members, parish councils, residents and developers.

4) Communities

Crucial Crew – This is always a popular educational event for local school children. In the past year it was delivered, with support from a number of partners, at MEAL in June. A total of 32 Schools, 896 children took part in a number of scenarios to improve personal safety and promote responsible and safe behaviour.

Joint Community Achievement Awards – this event was held at Haughly Barns in March last year and celebrated a number of ‘local heroes’ who contributed so much to our communities. 2016 will be the first single event for both Mid Suffolk and Babergh Councils. This will be held on 21st April 2016 at Wherstead Park and will celebrate the achievements of 29 unsung heroes who have worked tirelessly to make a difference within our communities.

Capital Grants provide the community with support for village halls, community centres, sports clubs, community shops and events. In 2015/16, a total of £141,224 was allocated across Mid Suffolk. Against a total project cost of £1,178,811, our support of 12% grant allocation levered in a further 88% funding for our communities.

Health and Housing Pilot - A key aspect of our contribution to improving health and wellbeing within our district is a collaborative approach with partnerships. Funding from Public Health has made possible to design a process of innovative and unique new health and wellbeing offer to some tenants in Hadleigh and Needham Market. The pilot project will provide different levels of support and a range of community-based health and wellbeing

interventions that will address the councils rent and council tax arrears, improve self-reported wellbeing and in addition, contribute to reduced demand on local health and care services.

Appendix C

Parish Council Chairman's Report for Annual Parish Meeting 5/4/16.

The past year has been a year of consolidation and changes for the Parish Council. While we have been settling in 3 new Councillors and a comparatively new Clerk, the Council has performed it's duties as well as ever. While we have had no major projects such as the Post Office roadway, the normal of the Council has kept us busy.

We have had 3 resignations from the Council this year, Matthew Young, Ian Hayward and John King, all of whom have given the Parish long serving and dedicated support. We will miss their expertise and knowledge particularly in the field of planning. As the Chairman of your Council I would like to thank the Councillors, both past and present, and the Clerk for their efforts over the last year.

This means there are currently 3 vacancies on the Council which we hope to fill by co-option of willing volunteers in the very near future. If any parishioners wish to volunteer please step and forward and let us know.

A great deal of the Council's workload is planning issues, both new applications and planning enforcement. This year we have had 2 major planning applications, the conversion of the touring campsite at Honeypot Farm to static caravans, where we have been successful in getting occupancy restrictions in place to prevent the site becoming residential and an application for further housing at Howards Close where our recommendations were overturned by MSDC. We expect to receive an application for a new development on the A143 in the next few months.

Planning enforcement and the Commons seem to go hand in hand. We are currently dealing with several cases of encroachment and unauthorised structures being erected on parts of our Commons. The Commons are a valued asset and it is up to us all to treat them with respect and use them as they are intended to be used. The Council is in the process of compiling a new Commons Guide, which we hope to distribute later in the year. We are also reviewing the Village Walks leaflet and again hope to have this available in the not too distant future.

The Council meets on Tuesdays, roughly every 6 weeks, at either Wortham Village Hall or Burgate Church Hall. A schedule of meetings of the Council and its sub- committees can be found on the Council's website. There is always a period where Parishioners can raise any issues they want at each meeting.

Stephen Rash

Chairman Wortham and Burgate Parish Council