

# **MINUTES of MEETING held at Palgrave Community Centre at 7.30 pm on THURSDAY 8 February 2018**

[www.palgrave.onesuffolk.net](http://www.palgrave.onesuffolk.net)

Present V. Pudney (Vice Chairman), M. Brown, E. Collins, W. Cooper, K. Mobbs (left 21:15), N. Weston, J. Shirley-Smith. Also in attendance County Councillor J. Fleming (left 20:20), District Councillor D. Burn; five members of the public (left after agenda item 02.18.17)

## **02.18.01 Election of Chairman**

Cllr Weston proposed and Cllr Shirley-Smith seconded that Cllr Pudney be elected as Chairman. All members were in favour. Cllr Pudney signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

**[POST-MEETING NOTE:** There followed a nomination and vote for vice chairman, the newly elected chairman's previous office, which was obviously now vacant. It was later realised, however, that this had not been an item on the agenda. The result was therefore invalid and the election of vice chairman will have to be an item on the next meeting's agenda.]

## **02.18.02 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies received from Cllr Marion Sneddon

## **02.18.03 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

02.18.03.1 Cllr Pudney reminded all councillors of their responsibility to abide by the Code of Conduct.

02.18.03.2 Cllr Pudney and Cllr Mobbs both declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 02.18.07.01, planning application ref. 1574/13 Retention of Wind Turbine.

## **02.18.04 PUBLIC FORUM**

02.18.04.1 Reports from County Cllr Fleming and District Cllr Burn

County Cllr Fleming reported on the following items.

- The consultation about possible changes to **school transport provision** continues to the end of February Views are sought on options for both the pre-and post-16 age groups. Please refer to:

[www.suffolk.gov.uk/schooltravel](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/schooltravel)

- There is nothing new to report from **Highways**. Officers are currently working on the detailed design for the improvements previously agreed. In response to comments from Cllrs Weston and Brown, Cllr Fleming asked the Council for a list of all ongoing matters reported and responses given to date, to be sent to her for further investigation. These will include: the long-outstanding matters of: the blocked gulleys on The Lows, first reported 2016 but still unresolved; missing signposts; and pot holes around the village, especially those in Crossing Road and Millway Lane, although Cllr Fleming did advise that repair work on most pot holes presently has to be given a low priority.

- The Council may have received a circular from the County Council Highways about 'self help' (devolving certain tasks to parishes) to gauge interest in this topic. If you have not received this please let me know, similarly if you have any questions about it.
- The **County element of the council tax** in the coming year will increase by 4.9% of which 3% is ring-fenced for Social Care. The demand for Children's Services has increased in recent years, including those for Looked After, Special Needs and Specialist Care, but without any additional Central Government funding being made available.

District Cllr Burn's report covered four key areas:

- The District has increased its share of the **council tax** in 2018/19 by 0.05%. This amounts to an annual increase of 81 pence for a Band D property.

Signed  Chairman

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- The Boundary Commission's final decisions on the **Ward Boundary Review** were expected early this month. However, they notified MSDC instead that they need to carry out a further 6-week consultation but they haven't said yet why or when it will begin.
- The **Joint Local Plan** consultation has received nearly 14,000 comments, the processing of which will extend finalising the submission draft slightly; even so, it is hoped that the draft will be ready for its final public consultation by next June/July.
- In anticipation of success at the capacity market auctions on 6-8 February, Progress Power has been working hard to complete all its pre-commencement conditions, such as archaeological investigations, etc. These are necessary precursors to implementing its Development Consent Order to construct a **gas-fired power station on Eye Airfield and an associated electricity sub-station in the fields between Yaxley and Thrandeston**. However, they failed to secure a contract at the capacity market; the price fell to £8.40 per unit generated, which must have been too low to make the investment a profitable proposition. They will continue to prepare for the construction work and try again at next December's auction. When it starts, construction will take two years to complete.

02.18.04.2 Members of the public comments. None

#### 02.18.05 Minutes of the December 2017 and January 2018 meetings

02.18.05.1 Minutes of the meeting of 14 December 2017:

Cllr Weston raised two issues: Item 12.17.05.1 concerned a commitment to spend funds on road improvements; this was stated, but there were no votes taken on how this was agreed or on actual spend amounts. The Parish Council needs to show accountability. Cllr Pudney will check previous copies on minutes to ascertain how this matter was agreed. A vote by parish councillors may be required before actual spending is incurred. Cllr Weston waived any changes to item 12.17.14.2 as being of a minor nature. As such the minutes of the December 2017 meeting were not signed and will be carried forward to the next Parish Council meeting when a fuller discussion and/or vote may take place.

Minutes of the meeting of 11 January 2018: The draft minute of item 01.18.09.01 concerning the wind turbine contains a sentence with a missing word represented by string of question marks; all councillors voted in favour of the amending the to the word 'undecided.' The minutes were then duly signed after this alteration.

02.18.05.2 Matters arising From the December minutes: The Community Speedwatch has restarted.

Matters arising from the January minutes: There is nothing to report on the street naming at the present time.

#### 02.18.06 Highways

02.18.06.1 No update on traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures to report.

#### 02.18.07 Planning

02.18.07.01 The following planning applications were considered:

| Ref  | Location                                   | Application  |
|--|--|--|
| DC/18/00247  | Bridge House<br>Barns, Denmark<br>Bridge   | Prior Approval Application under Part 3, Class Q (a) and (b) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 – Conversion of agricultural buildings to 2 dwelling houses and associated works. |
| After a lengthy discussion centred mainly around vehicular access Cllr Weston proposed and Cllr Shirley-Smith seconded that no comments should be submitted on the application. The motion was carried unanimously.            |  |  |
| 1574/13  | Palgrave<br>Community Centre,<br>Rose Lane | Retention of wind turbine 24.8 metres to tip (18.3 metres to hub) in current position (Turbine previously granted under Planning Permission ref 2777/10).  |
| Before discussion began, District Cllr Burn raised a point of order through the Chairman regarding the possible need for some parish councillors who had not already declared an interest in this item to do so. He asked Cllr |  |  |

Signed ..... Chairman

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Weston if he felt the value of his property was affected by the nearby presence of the turbine. Cllr Weston thought not and therefore maintained he had no need to declare an interest, neither pecuniary or non-pecuniary. Cllr Weston felt that the council should not support the application as it had objected to it when originally consulted (see minutes of meeting held on 9 July 2013). After some contrary views had been made Cllr Mobbs proposed that the Council should support the application and his proposal was duly seconded. The motion was defeated by 3 votes to 4. After further discussion, during which Cllr Mobbs left the meeting, Cllr Weston proposed that the Council should object to the application and asked Cllr Brown if he would second the motion. Cllr Brown agreed but as the meeting was about to move to the vote a member of the public pointed out there was a perception that Cllr Collins had a pecuniary interest in the application. It was unclear whether at that point Cllr Collins conceded that she did indeed have a pecuniary interest. Nonetheless, the vote took place, but without the participation of Cllr Collins, and the motion was carried by 3 votes to 2.

**[POST-MEETING NOTE:** With hindsight, and for the sake of openness and transparency, it is safer to conclude that neither of the two votes that took place during this item were valid than to accept one over the other. Because of the of the confusion over whether Cllr Collins had a pecuniary interest or not and whether or not she had declared it prior to the item, there was uncertainty as to whether or not she should have left the room throughout the item. Not only did she not do this, she actively participated in the debate and cast a vote in the first motion, which would have been quite acceptable if she had, indeed, earlier, declared a non-pecuniary interest. In the absence of an experienced clerk and given that this was Cllr Pudney's first meeting as chairman, District Cllr Burn has subsequently conceded that he was the person at the meeting most experienced in the conduct of parish council meetings. Although the responsibility was not his, he regrets his oversight in not drawing Cllr Pudney's attention to this irregularity before it was allowed to interfere with proper process. Regardless of that, it is his conclusion that no valid decision on this item was reached during the meeting and therefore no comment has been returned to MSDC. Consideration of the application can be revisited at the next parish council meeting.]

02.18.07.2 To note any planning determinations received: none

02.18.07.3 Any other planning matters: none

#### 02.18.08 Governance

02.18.08.1 The resignations of Cllr Mike Bootman and Cllr Elaine Bootman from the Parish Council were noted.

All councillors agreed that Cllr Pudney should write a letter of appreciation to Mr and Mrs Bootman thanking them for their hard work and dedication to the Parish Council and to the community of Palgrave as a whole. Cllr Pudney will also write to the former clerk thanking her for her commitment and hard work for the Parish Council.

02.18.08.2 There was no discussion on the procedure for the new vacancies; it was agreed that the item should be carried forward to the next meeting.

02.18.08.3 No applications to fill the pre-existing vacancy on the parish council had been received.

#### 02.18.09 Grass Cutting

To note termination of contract for cutting Cemetery, Green and Churchyard. The present contractor (RG Maintenance Services) has withdrawn from providing services. The remaining contractor (Vertas) is able to continue but prices will increase by 3%. Cllr Pudney will confirm to this contractor that the service will continue to be required, with seven cuts a year and weed control for the cemetery carpark.

#### 02.18.10 Street Naming

No information had been received and therefore consideration of this item was deferred to the next meeting.

#### 02.18.11 Palgrave and District Community Centre

There was no discussion on who should become the new Parish Council representative on the PDCC following the resignation of Cllr Bootman.

Signed ..... Chairman

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**02.18.12 Financial Matters**

02.18.12.1 As the current financial statement was not hand, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

02.18.12.2 It was agreed to make the following payments:

| Amount  | Payee               | Details   |
|---------|---------------------|---|
| £186.13 | Sarah Foote         | Expenses relating to Parish Clerk; purchase of Bullguard anti-virus, mileage to Palgrave, additional hours to provide Clerking service post 31 January 2018 |
| £13.50  | Anglia Book Keeping | Payroll Months 7, 8 and 9   |

**02.08.13 Cemetery and Churchyard**

02.18.13.1 Damage to the boundary wall of the churchyard was noted. Cllr Shirley-Smith proposed that a survey be carried out to show the extent of the damage to the boundary wall and the costs of all repair works needed; seconded by Cllr Cooper and agreed unanimously.

**02.18.14 Paths and Open Spaces**

02.18.14.1 Priory Wood – no information received.

02.18.14.2 Footpaths – no information received

**02.18.14.3 Village Spring Clean**

Cllr Pudney will arrange for a notification to be placed in *The Star* announcing the litter pick planned for Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**02.18.15 Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan**

It was agreed that Cllr Shirley-Smith will be the Parish Council representative on the D&DNP Steering Group following the resignation of Cllr E Bootman.

**02.18.16 Correspondence**

The following items of correspondence were noted:

| Date Received   | From                                      | Details                                |
|---|---|--|
| 27.01.2018  | Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch               | Donation request                       |
| Cllr Pudney will reply to this asking them to reapply in the autumn, when the Parish Council considers all such applications.   |   |  |
| 24.01.2018  | Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils | Consultation on merger of the Councils |
| This was an 8-week consultation that ended on 5-Feb-18. The notification email and the attached letter from the Leaders of the two councils was dated 24-Jan-18. Consequently, no response was possible |   |  |
| 30.01.2018  | Parishioner                               | Application to the War Memorials Trust |
| A parishioner has advised the Parish Council that the War Memorial is in a poor state of repair.  |   |  |

**02.18.17** The meeting was closed to the general public pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act 1960).

02.18.17.1 Recruitment of Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer: One application has been received and Cllrs Pudney, Cooper and Shirley-Smith will interview this candidate on Thursday 22 March 2018 at 7.30pm if room at the Community Centre is available.

**02.18.18 Matters for information**

None

**02.18.19 Date of next meeting**

Thursday, 8 March 2018 at 7:30 pm.

22:05 Meeting closed.

Signed ..... Chairman

Date ..... 12/4/18