

Bawdsey Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Wednesday 26th April 2017 at 7.00pm

Bawdsey Village Hall

In Attendance – Chairman Brian Johnson (BJ), Jenny Webb (Clerk) SCC Councillor, Andrew Reid, SCDC Councillor Christine Block and 20 parishioners including councillors.	
<i>Meeting called to order by Chair BJ at 7.00pm.</i>	
1. Chairman's welcome & apologies for absence: Peter Wain, Chris Mann, Nick Crick, Rev Ruth, SF, Di Clouting, Susan Foster and Jo Smellie BJ explained that the meeting would consist of two parts with interval for tea and coffee: reports from the past year and plans for the coming year. Parishioners were welcome to ask questions at any time in the proceedings.	Action:
2. Signing of Minutes as a true record: <i>Annual Parish Meeting 16th May 2016</i> –The Minutes had been approved by the PC in July 2016 and were duly signed by Chair BJ	
3. Current activities at SCC and SCDC: In his report SCC Cll Reid covered i. Finance ii. Education and iii. Infrastructure. Finance: He mentioned the continued freezing of council tax and the rise in the social care precept to 3% to deliver social care, brought about by an ageing population and the rise in the minimum wage. £32m worth of savings have been achieved but there is a budget gap of £39.8m during the next financial year. On top of the proposed savings, the council plans to utilise around £8.5m from its total usable reserves of around £49m. With the removal of direct grants from central government, there will be challenges to fund front-line services in the future. Education: There have been continued improvements in educational attainment at GCSE level, a 6% rise since 2014. The Raising the Bar programme is in its sixth year. Over 94% of parents got their first choice of primary school. Infrastructure: Infrastructure projects have continued with £10m spent on road surfacing work, 10% of all roads. Stage 2 Consultation on Sizewell C has just finished. Whilst acknowledging the importance of the project to the local economy, SCC has asked EDF for a legacy in the shape of a 4 village by-pass. SCC has been given a £1m grant from Government to present a business case for the by-pass. The full report can be read on the council's website www.bawdsey.onesuffolk.net . Following questions from the public, Cll Reid acknowledged there has to be a comprehensive approach by the council to the problem of invasive Alexander overgrowth. The "Bailey bridge" at Shingle Street has been installed to protect a badger sett, however OTT it seems. Fears about more heavy vehicles on the country roads and the part concrete curbs play in narrowing the lane at some points was acknowledged. Chairman thanked Cll Reid for his attention over the past year. Cll Reid's full report can be found on www.bawdsey.onesuffolk.net under parish council meetings.	

<p>SCDC: First of all Cll Christine Block presented the wider picture for all councils in the coming few years, emphasising the effects of cuts in government grants and the pressures on district councils to deliver services. She stressed that communities are going to have to become more self sufficient. Eg parish councils will have to pay for new dog bins to be installed. SCDC has to take a more commercial approach to delivering services and will need to generate more income given the reduction in revenue.</p> <p>Flood risk management and coastal protection is another recurring theme and local monies may have to be found for the latter.</p> <p>Housing: SCDC has planned for an additional 7,900 houses but inspectors say 11,000 are needed by 2023. Because district councils earn “A New Homes Bonus”, it is likely more houses will be built. A new Housing Bill means there will be fewer opportunities for parish councils to oppose housing applications. Affordable homes are another theme. Central government has given a pot of money to coastal communities with excessive second home numbers to establish Community Land Trust to administer this grant. Bawdsey is designated within one of these areas. This will need commitment from the community and Cll Block recommended councils on the peninsula combine to put together a joint plan.</p> <p>The Environment: Preserving the quality of the environment whilst at the same time promoting a sustainable economy in the form of tourism are two competing elements. A balance has to be struck in our area which is an AONB and draw upon this designation. Helpful local initiatives include Wild Villages, Quiet Lanes and Welcome Walkers. Other issues such as Broadband Speeds, Rural Transport and Local Shops are ongoing concerns. Cll Block concluded by saying that there has been huge changes in her 20 years as a district councillor. Chair BJ thanked her for her commitment to the parish over the years.</p>	
<p>4. Presentation of accounts: Clerk presented the end of year statement of accounts to the meeting. The total balance of three accounts amounted to £17,661.49.</p> <p>Current account ****0571 £1,100.47; BQVC ****7141 £12,547.90; Savers Account £4,013.12 See enclosed statement.</p> <p>Clerk explained that the amount in the BQVC is in flux and will soon be reduced with repayments of VAT and part of the Coastal Community Grant which has not been spent. The sum of £4,000 is ring-fenced since it is made up of two grants specifically given for the build of the Visitor Centre.</p> <p>The sum of £565 was given to local charities from the regular account: Ipswich and District CAB; East Anglia Air Ambulance; Disability Advice Service; Suffolk Accident Rescue Service (SARS); Felixstowe Volunteer Coast Patrol Rescue Service, SCAR (Suffolk Coast Against Retreat. A poppy wreath is bought every year.</p> <p>Copies of the budget were made available. The precept for 2017-18 was raised from £6,900 to £7,280 to meet current expenditure and to build up reserves. This amounts to a rise of 5.5% to £37.33 per year for a Band D property.</p>	
<p>5. Plans for the coming year 2017-18:</p> <p>Community Land Trust: As outlined above, the government has allocated a pot of money to five communities where the level of second home ownership is high thus affecting the ability of locals to afford housing. SCDC is looking to set up a Community Land Trust to administer these monies run by volunteers from the affected communities. Bawdsey</p>	

Parish Council will be discussing this initiative and will inform parishioners about it through the Bawdsey Bulletin and website.

Bawdsey Quay Visitor Centre: (Full report by Peter Wain on the website) Although the original project has stalled, the Working Group is pleased and grateful that the District Council has agreed to continue with the installation of the water main to the public toilets on the Amenity Site. As most people will be aware, this installation is in progress at the moment and it is hoped that it will be concluded towards the end of May. This installation provides considerable potential for future developments on the site.

The Parish Council commissioned a report on the best sewage system for the site and SCDC seem keen to reopen the toilets which would be cheaper than continuing to use portaloos.

The Parish Council/Working Group and the District Council are eager to continue to work together to achieve some improvements to the site in order to make it a more attractive feature in the village. With that in mind, a scheme has been proposed by the Working Group to restore the pond on the site. At the moment the thoughts are that the pond should undergo dredging to remove over thirty years of leaf mould, some cutting back of the canopy to permit more light to reach the pond and some tidying up and replanting around the edges. It was felt that this would make the site considerably more attractive, would benefit wildlife and also complement the bird and bat boxes.

With this in mind, representatives of the Parish Council, the Working Group, SCDC and Suffolk Norse have met to discuss the creation of a strategy with a view to implementation, commencing in the Autumn. However, no work will be undertaken without advice being received from the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB which might provide working parties.

The Parish Council and SCDC are also considering the viability of establishing an outdoor classroom to be used by school groups, possibly administered by SWT. The East Suffolk Building Preservation Trust is keen to restore the ruined tin chapel near the amenity site on the grounds of Bawdsey Manor. The PC would be pleased to see it moved on to the amenity site.

Nuala Simpson has agreed to monitor the bird and bat boxes on the site.

New Village Sign: Cll Mark Dovey presented his unconventional sign to the meeting and invited comments from those present. Standing 16 ft high and designed to stand on the village green, it represents a radar transmitter tower. The idea met with general approval and amusement. Variations on this theme were discussed such as a straight post with the radar mast and village name above the post. Any other ideas welcome. It was thought a good idea to try to prepare it to coincide with the opening of the Radar Trust Receiver Station. Funding for this sign stands at £1,600.

Wind Farms AO1 and 3: Cll Richard Tricker informed the meeting of the progress of these two wind farms, two of four to be built eventually offshore. There has been no definite start date put forward because the archaeological surveys are taking longer than anticipated with only 20% of the work completed to date. A haul road from the landfall site to the River Deben will be constructed and will last two years. Horizontal Directional Drilling will take place 1 kilometre out to sea and underground cabling will be put down as

far as Bramford. This will entail considerable increase in traffic through the villages with as many as 134 lorries per day. **When the start date has been arranged, there will be a public meeting.**

In answer to questions from the floor, Cll Tricker explained that there would be no community benefit paid out by Scottish Power because underground cabling is deemed to be a benefit within an AONB. Parish councils have had no say in the route of the cabling or the position of the substation in Bramford.

Concerns about contractors vehicles speeding through the village were expressed.

Monitoring of heavy vehicles will be vital. Contractors have not yet been appointed so some questions can't yet be answered. It was suggested that a letter is written to SP asking for their lorries to drive at 20mph through Bawdsey. (RT)

Traffic Management: With the new radar trust museum opening in September, PGL activities beginning in the summer and the Scottish Power wind farm works beginning in the near future, there will be a lot more traffic on the country roads and through the village.

There are a number of options to tackle speeding. Communities can engage in Speed Watch where trained volunteers measure the speed of vehicles with a speed gun; A speed monitoring device called SID such as used in Hollesley could be loaned or slow down stickers on bins could be purchased. Highways have yet to conduct a speed survey in the village to see what the level of speeding is. Just having a sign saying Speedwatch in operation could act as a deterrent. Clerk will ask Hollesley PC about the possibility of sharing their device. This will be discussed at the May AGM.

Non-listed Heritage Assets: Chair BJ explained the concept of non-listed Heritage Assets which SCDC is keen for parish councils to take on board and to document. These relate to buildings which have some heritage value and can include even parts of a building such as a gable end or a chimney. BJ explained that he and Cll Rouse have already begun a survey and have counted 30 potential additions. These include the Model Cottages and other estate buildings from the Quilter era; The Old Star, Bawdsey Hall and the Rudy Mock houses along East Lane built in the 1960s. Military installations from the two world wars should be added to the list. Volunteers are needed to continue this work. Cll Dovey showed interest in becoming part of this project. Cll Mark has also begun looking at the history of the older buildings which could form the basis of another village project.

Formal Meeting ended 10.00 pm when a glass of wine was served and further informal discussion ensued.

Signature:

Date: