

## MARKET WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Market Weston Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018 7:30pm in Market Weston Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: S Austin, G Hatten, R Hood, D Fulcher, A Hall & B. Cllr Bull

1. Apologies: Cllr: S Allen, M Martin & C. Cllr J Spicer

2. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

2.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None

2.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None

2.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None

3 Minutes - Minutes of the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018 meeting agreed and signed as a correct record.

4. Meeting open to the public

None present.

5. Report of County Councillor: J Spicer

Cllr Spicer was unable to attend the meeting but sent the following brief report.

All seems good now with the high-speed broadband availability, but she would appreciate any feed back. Changes have now been agreed for school transport from Sept 2019, but it will be spread over 7 years now. Cllr Spicer will provide a full report in September.

6. Report from B. Councillor: C Bull

The Boundary Commissions recommendations in the boundary review would see no changes to the Barningham ward, in which Market Weston sits. The Clerk will write to support this recommendation.

**Action Clerk**

7. Report from Police: Paul Fox, Community Engagement Officer

Unfortunately, Paul Fox was unable to attend the meeting. He is hoping to be able to attend in November.

PCC update: 100 police officers will move into Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs).

The extra resource aims to ensure the constabulary has the ability to respond to the increasing demand it faces, and the public's desire for more visible policing.

The changing nature of crime and its rise in certain areas means Suffolk's policing model needs to be as flexible, effective and efficient as possible for the communities it serves.

To reflect this, the force is looking to move 97 police constables and seven sergeants into its SNTs. This would mean there would be 159 PCs and 26 sergeants in its SNTs.

We intend to do so by restructuring the way we work and looking at the best use of our resources.

To achieve this, and remain within the challenging financial landscape the constabulary has to operate in, it is proposing to reduce the number of police community support officers from the current 81 full-time equivalent (FTE) posts to 48 FTEs.

The budgeted number of posts is 107, although PCSO vacancies have remained unfilled since 2017 to keep those put at risk of redundancy to a minimum.

The transition would strengthen the resilience of the force's policing of community issues and ensure the right resources are in the right place at the right time.

The purpose of the proposed changes is to provide a proactive policing resource that puts visibility and accessibility at its forefront.

8. Progress reports. For information, from:

8.1 Chairman

7.1.1 Broadband update

Broadband has now been installed. It would seem some have seen an improvement, but not all. We will continue to monitor the situation.

8.2 Clerk:

8.2.1 Parish forum SCC highways

The Clerk attended the recent Parish Forum which had its main focus on SCC Highways. SCC provided a detailed account about their position regarding highway repairs. A copy of the report has been sent to all the Councillors. A summary of the meeting is provided below:

SCC highlighted some of the issues Highways are currently facing, including new laws around grass cutting procedure (support vehicle now required) and gulley clearing (waste water can no longer be used to test drainage). They also informed the meeting that central government raises over £35 billion in road taxes, however only £1 billion of that is returned to local authorities. Mark Stephens gave a presentation (circulated) highlighting the financial and workload pressures that are being faced at the county and answered questions which had been previously sent in by the parishes. SCC opened the floor to further questions.

It was asked how the parishes can help with the problems faced by Highways – SCC- County have previously sent out surveys to parish and town councils about how they would be willing to assist with Highways. However, there are legal barriers around how this would work. Highways is obliged to ensure that anyone working on a highway has been provided with the necessary training, insurance and equipment. Anyone who is working individually on a carriageway is personally liable for any accidents that may occur, up to and including manslaughter charges. County understands that a formal agreement is needed with parishes and there is a piece of work around this currently ongoing.

It was asked about the quality of repairs that are occurring – SCC: acknowledged that many repairs that have occurred have had to be temporary rather than permanent due to time constraints.

It was commented that temporary repairs were a waste of money and asked about some of the repairs in Haverhill in particular that had deteriorated within weeks – SCC: in many cases temporary repairs were the necessity although county would prefer permanent repairs as well.

They have been experimenting with different techniques and materials and apologised that there had been several fillings in Haverhill that had not been up to standard, but were being fixed.

It was asked how best to communicate with county as a number of those present had several ongoing issues in the village dating back years in one particular case – SCC: the first point of contact should be the county customer services team followed by an escalation to the local county councillor. Individual contacts for highways workers are not given out as they become a target for all communication. Waiting years was not normal. Carol Bull asked about flooding, in particular what powers county had to ensure farmers were maintaining their field drainage and ditches – SCC: flooding is under a different department within the county. Operational highways are responsible for maintaining the highway network only. County can intervene if an issue is raised to them, however anything involving the ditches and gulleys also involves the Environment Agency. It was asked about the county's satisfaction level with contractor Kier and if funding such as the Isle of White system had been considered – SCC: County are happy with Kier and are adding in an extra £21 million over the next three years. SCC are looking at new processes and materials but funding systems such as the Isle of White technique have been shown not to work.

A member present said the major issue in his area was resident's lack of confidence in Highways after many issues have been left for so long.

It was commented that getting rid of direct labour was a mistake.

Vicki Gay asked what happened to the velocity machine which had previously been used to quickly fill in potholes – SCC: the machine is no longer used due to a high failure rate.

It was asked how SCC was monitoring the contract with Kier – SCC: Kier are providing the service to county's specification and the introduction of the community engineer role will also assist with monitoring repairs. Contract with Kier has now saved the county £8 - £10 million.

It was commented that the major issue with roads in Suffolk was the road foundations were not designed to cope with the amount of traffic they currently face – SCC: agreed that many of the rural roads in particular had little to no foundation. Unfortunately, much of the funding for roads has been tied by the central government into new developments and local authorities are unable to use the funding on existing roads.

It was encouraged that everyone in attendance should petition their MP for more funding from central government and to direct any further questions to the families and communities' team to pass on to highways. SCC assured that county was trying to find ways to collaborate with parishes.

#### 8.2.2 Police: Suffolk Constabulary Funded PCSOs, Volunteers sought & Community Engagement officers.

##### Suffolk Constabulary Funded PCSOs

Over the last few months the Constabulary has been undertaking a review of how they manage the way in which Police and Community Support Officers are provided to districts, towns, parishes and other organisations. The Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable have reaffirmed their commitment to the continued provision of 'funded' PCSOs and as such have written to see if we would be interested in working with them to fund a PCSO and they would welcome notification of any intention to seek a funded PCSO by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> August.

Although it was noted how beneficial it was to have PCSO in the village and the relationships formed were valuable to both the Parish Council and the residents, concerns were raised about the fact that this is a service we are already paying for, through our Council Tax. Therefore, it was felt that we should be receiving it anyway. Further we would like to know how much a PCSO would cost opposed to a Police Constable. We will at this early stage express an interest and ask for some further information.

##### Volunteers sought

Members of the public are being invited to support Suffolk Constabulary by becoming the "eyes and ears" of their communities as part of a new initiative.

The Local Policing Volunteer pilot scheme, which was originally launched across six towns and villages including, in Bungay, Beccles, Woodbridge, Eye, Stanton and Long Melford in April, has now been opened up to the whole county and has already attracted early interest but spaces remain for further dedicated individuals.

As part of the non-uniform role, volunteers become accessible points of contact for their communities and help Suffolk Constabulary to detect crime by promoting effective communication and the prompt reporting of suspicious and criminal activity in each area.

Volunteers are not expected to become involved in any incident where conflict or threat exists and will have no power of arrest or detention. They are there to report anything suspicious or unusual directly to the police. They will receive full induction training and have access to their local police station to attend appropriate briefings.

Local Policing Volunteers are an important element of our police family, which includes police officers, PCSOs, police staff and the Specials.

##### Local Policing Volunteers:

- must be aged over 18 years
- don't have an upper age limit
- can work up to a maximum of 20 hours per week and hours are mutually agreed locally
- are not required to wear a uniform
- will be covered by public liability insurance wherever they undertake their volunteering duties

Anyone interested in becoming a Local Policing Volunteer will undergo a training package, be given a tabard and have a direct point of contact with police, as well as be included in regular meetings. The supportive role is also designed to work alongside usual activities and at no point requires participants to directly get involved in tackling crime.

Volunteers will need to undergo and pass security checks at the appropriate level for the role, although no medical assessment is required.

To gain further information regarding any of the constabulary's volunteering roles, visit [www.suffolk.pnn.police.uk/joinus](http://www.suffolk.pnn.police.uk/joinus) or email [specialsandvolunteers@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:specialsandvolunteers@suffolk.pnn.police.uk) or phone on 01473 613589.

### 8.2.3 Boundary Commission review

The Clerk attended a briefing on how the Boundary Commission prepare their draft recommendations for the West Suffolk Council wards. The consultation on this started yesterday and we are encouraged to comment as they can only base their result on comments received. If objections are received these need to be weighed against support. To this end the Clerk will make comments in support of the proposals put forward. **Action Clerk**

### 8.2.4 Community Energy and Neighbourhood Planning

The Clerk attended a Community Energy and Neighbourhood Planning event. There was some very helpful advice on renewable energy as well as information about Community Energy. It was agreed that Community Energy may be something we could look at pursuing in the future.

### 8.2.5 Suffolk Cinema Network

Suffolk Cinema Network are a non-profit organisation who support pop-up and community film screenings right across Suffolk. They have four sets of fully portable cinema equipment around the county that can be used at any time. Although they can't screen films currently in the cinemas they do have access to films 6 weeks before they go on general release. There is a very successful scheme in Stanton and regular events there are well attended.

### 8.2.6 Trees on the green, rope swing

The Clerk met with Peter Kerry, CCT, to discuss the possibility of putting a rope swing up on the Green. He risk assessed the tree and said as long as the rope was robust and checked regularly, there would be no reason why the tree can not be used for a rope swing. The checks would need to be recorded. Cllr Fulcher will take responsibility for this. Cllr Bull has offered to pay for the swing. **Action Cllr Fulcher**

### 8.2.7 Annual Play area report

A rather in-depth annual report has been received.

### 8.2.8 Phone box-book swap, update on refurbishment

The rivets need to be clamped down. The Clerk will contact the contractor about this.

**Action Clerk**

## 9. Finance.

9.1 Payments. The following payments were approved, and the cheques signed by two signatories.

Administration	£566.64
LCPAS, Chairman training	£40.00
MWVH, hall hire Apr 17-Mar 18	£56.00

### 9.2 BACS transfers

Since the removal in 2014 of section 150(5) from the Local Government Act 1972, local councils have been able to make use of modern methods of making payments, such as internet banking. However, it is imperative that proper processes are in place to ensure safe and efficient methods of payment for goods and services. It is recommended that: -

Any application to open an internet banking account in the name of the Council MUST be approved by resolution and the application form signed by at least two existing cheque signatories. The Bank must be instructed that overdraft facilities are not authorised.

Forms or letters of authorisation to transfer sums to the internet account are to be signed by any two existing cheque signatories.

The Council appoints two Councillors (who are not cheque signatories) to verify the schedule of payments made from the internet banking account against sample invoices selected at random on a regular basis.

The Council advises its insurers and introduces such further safeguards, such as increased fidelity insurance, as may be required by the Insurers.

Hard copies of the bank statements to be sent to the Chairman monthly and made available for inspection at Council

Barclays said they didn't offer BASC with our current community account. It was decided not to pursue this at this time.

### 9.3 Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk provided the Councillors with an up to date bank reconciliation.

10. Planning Matters to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted.

There was a discussion about the change of use of a house in the village. Cllr Bull will investigate this. **Action Cllr Bull**

### 11. Defibrillator

Update on application for funding. The application has been submitted, there was an issue with the named person, the Clerk and the Chairman have both actioned this.

### 12. Data Protection

There is a requirement to register our DPO with the ICO. The Clerk has done this.

### 13 Councillors reports and items for future agenda

Concerns were raised about the condition of the overgrown verges along a number of roads in the village, these included Church Road and New Common Road. The Clerk will look at the SCC cutting schedule. It was discussed however that we perhaps need to consider taking over some of the verge cutting ourselves. **Action Clerk**

The seat at the village hall is in a poor state of repair. Cllr Fulcher kindly offered to make the necessary repairs. **Action Cllr Fulcher**

Concerns were raised about the locations that school children were being dropped off and picked up as the current arrangements were considered to be unsafe. The Clerk will speak to the bus contractor and ask that they are collected and dropped off somewhere safe, for instance the bus stop by the phone box. **Action Clerk**

A caravan has been parked on the village boundary. The Clerk will investigate this. **Action Clerk**

### 14. Correspondence for information noted

14.1 West Suffolk Civic Leadership Review, With the creation of a new West Suffolk Council in April 2019, SEBC can redefine the arrangements for civic leadership in order to support their ambitions to drive growth and prosperity in the local communities. The new arrangements need to look to the future while recognising and building on the traditions of the past.

15. Date of next meeting: Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2018

16. To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following items:

16.1 Personnel Issues. None.

16.2 Legal Issues. None.