

BOTESDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held Monday, 5 July 2021
Botesdale Village Hall

Present: Cllr Des Bavington-Lowe (Vice-Chair) Cllr Greg Russell
Cllr William Sargeant (Chair) Cllr Jack Stracey

Parish Clerk – Leeann Jackson-Eve
District/County Cllr – Jessica Fleming
2 Members of the Public

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Simon Dickinson
2. **Casual Vacancies:** There were four vacancies.
3. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 7 June 2021.** The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed as a true record.
4. **Members Declarations of Interests and Dispensations:** None.
5. **Public Forum:** A member of the public expressed appreciation at the amount of time spent on the Recreation Ground Regeneration Project and gave feedback about fencing, CCTV and trees. It was requested that the Project recycle the old play equipment.

Another member of the public spoke about the site meeting on 2 July and agreed that the area needed regeneration. However, they felt that the designs were over the top given the amount of use the site currently had.

District/County Cllr Fleming reported that a multi-agency team from Lincolnshire would carry out an independent review into Special Education Needs and Disabilities provision in Suffolk, to focus on communication protocols and family-facing elements. The review started at the end of June and would be completed in early August. About 18,000 young people were supported through SEND services, including 5,900 with Education Health and Care Plans which was about double the 2014 number. Residents could participate in the review by sharing their experiences of SEND services within Suffolk County Council at SendReview@suffolk.gov.uk. West Suffolk Hospital Trust New Build – A SCC Health Scrutiny Committee sub-group would undertake an observer role on plans and progress for the replacement of WSH by a new hospital. The preferred (adjacent) location was Harwick Manor. The Trust would be launching public engagement drop-in events beginning 5 July – 15 August and a virtual meeting would be held on 13 July 5.30pm - 7pm. A second phase will begin in the autumn. Further information about public engagement and an online feedback form could be found at www.wsh.nhs.uk/New-healthcare-facility

Councillors had approved CIFCO's annual business plan ahead of its review by Full Council in July, with the property investment company having now brought in more than £5.4m to support council services. CIFCO had operated at a loss over the past year which was unsurprising given the current climate for commercial and retail. However, it was considered to be a long-term investment strategy for the councils.

New Stowmarket 'virtual' high street - Shopping in Stowmarket was now just a click away thanks to the Virtual High Street sites. Over 100 new businesses had signed up in the towns of Hadleigh and Stowmarket. More information could be found at virtualhighstreet.uk

The Locality Award budget was now open to all local groups for funding of small projects.

6. **Planning:**
 - 6.1 **Planning Applications:** None.
 - 6.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:** None.
 - 6.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions/Appeals by Mid Suffolk DC:**
 - 6.3.1 **Mill House, The Street.** Ref. DC/21/03153. Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area - Removal of 1no Sycamore tree. NO OBJECTION.
 - 6.4 **Notification of other Planning Matters:** None.

7. Correspondence:

- 7.1 **SCC:** The PC considered the request to support the installation of new footpath fingerpost plaques and it was agreed to express an interest.
- 7.2 **MSDC:** The PC considered the request for information about sustainable travel and it was agreed to check whether all of the PIIP projects had been entered on the recent survey carried out by MSDC.
- 7.3 **MSDC:** The PC noted the changes to the Joint Local Plan examination hearing schedule.
- 7.4 **SALC:** The PC noted the information available about the Queen's Jubilee 2022.

8. Ongoing Items:

- 8.1 **Recreation Ground Refurbishment:** Cllr Russell reported that James Blake Assoc was proceeding with the design development as laid out in the article in the Botesdale Bugle. An informal site meeting with interested residents had been held on 2 July and this had been attended by Cllr Russell, Cllr Bavington-Lowe, the Clerk and two other members of the Sub-Committee as well as Phil Kemp, the Design Out Crime Office at Suffolk Police. This had been arranged in response to concerns set out in two emails from residents who lived near the Recreation Ground. These were primarily concerned with safety, security and the anti-social behaviour (ASB) which had been reported at the Ground. Unfortunately, there had been a lack of real-time reporting of ASB so the statistics the Police had were not representative and Mr Kemp and the Sub-Committee had strongly encouraged the meeting attendees to start reporting any ASB, if they were not already, by using 999 or 101 as appropriate. The residents had made some suggestions for improved security which included CCTV; enclosing the entire site in a vandal-proof fence; locking the site out of hours and/or providing a warden. All of these had been considered as part of the Project Brief and the design development and there were significant concerns that they make the site unpleasant and unwelcoming. There was also a wider community issue with regard to CCTV and human rights. However, the Sub-Committee had agreed that it would be beneficial to carry out a safety/security review of the designs with Mr Kemp and RoSPA. The PC agreed with this approach and suggested that it might be helpful to get in touch with other parishes to find out what they had done about ASB. Another concern raised was that of road safety and the Sub-Committee had explained to residents that the PC had already attempted to extend the 30mph zone on Mill Road North without success. A resident had suggested making it one-way. However, the PC considered this a non-starter due to the cost and very lengthy alternative routes it would force on locals. Mr Kemp had suggested a community Speedwatch group, for which the Police would provide training, and a Friends of Botesdale Recreation Ground group to assist with maintaining the site as good maintenance was proven to have an effect on reducing ASB. The PC agreed with the Sub-Committee that both were excellent ideas and any attempt by residents to set these up would be encouraged. In particular, data from Speedwatch would be helpful in providing further argument for support from Highways for a 30mph extension. The PC agreed that the way forward, as suggested by the Sub-Committee, would be to:
 - a) Liaise with Suffolk Police and RoSPA on the safety and security of the design;
 - b) ask SALC to circulate a request to other parishes for information about security at other similar sites;
 - c) investigate CCTV but as a wider community issue; and
 - d) monitor the issues as the new Ground came online and address any problems as they arose. There was strong agreement with the Police that the more people who used the site, the less anti-social behaviour there would be.
- 8.2 **Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan:** There had been no feedback yet from the article in the Parish Magazine.
- 8.3 **Village Assets Refurbishment:** This was now mostly complete with the exception of putting new stickers with ownership and refill information on the grit bins. Cllr Bavington-Lowe's investigation of street lighting maintenance requirements was still ongoing. It was agreed to get some quotes for a notice board for the Recreation Ground and ask James Blake Associates about a location which wouldn't be in the way during the construction phase of the Regeneration Project.
- 8.4 **Sarah's Wood:** An article giving information about the background of the bequest had gone in the Parish Magazine and Sarah Holt-Wilson's daughter had expressed her appreciation. Cllr Sargeant's re-drawing of user boundaries was ongoing. An

email had been received from a resident expressing dismay about the closure of access to the site and the lack of replacement sites for bike users in the village. It was noted that the access had been closed by the developer as it was unsafe.

8.5 **Marl Pits:** The Chairman and the Clerk had met an officer from Suffolk Wildlife Trust on site and had been advised that the pond could be restored and there were agencies who could provide advice. Pond restoration would attract more insects and therefore more wildlife. However, a number of trees needed to be removed to create a better lit environment for the pond and some excavation of the pond would be required. It was agreed that this could be quite expensive as the location was difficult for vehicles and equipment to access. It was suggested that the PC could start with recording the existing wildlife on site, either by a professional or possibly by students, e.g. Hartismere. The officer also suggested other initiatives such as recording ancient trees. An Ancient Tree Forum app was available which allowed walkers to register trees of a certain girth. The Clerk would continue to gather information for a notice board on site.

8.6 **Traffic Regulation Orders:** A reply from Suffolk County Council had indicated that there was not a strong enough argument for amending the speed limits in the requested locations. They felt that the requested extensions would move the speed restrictions too far from the village settlements and drivers would therefore not see the need for a lower limit. If compliance was poor this would undermine the good speed limits achieved elsewhere in Suffolk and at worst, create a false sense of security if drivers were travelling above the limit. The PC felt this was a firm response and agreed to look into alternatives such as a VAS sign.

8.7 **County Broadband:** It was noted that numbers of sign-ups were reportedly increasing steadily.

9. **New Items:** None.

10. **Village Status Reports:**

10.1 **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman had received an email about inconsiderate parking near The Limes and the Clerk had reported this to the Civil Parking Enforcement team at West Suffolk Council. It was agreed to publicise the reporting process more widely. It was noted that the email touched on the wider subject of parking in the village, something the PC could do little about.

10.2 **Clerk's Report:** The Clerk reported that the Co-operative Bank had requested more information needed to open the new account for the Recreation Ground Charity. The requirements from councillors would be circulated.

10.3 **Local Organisations:**

- **BARWOODS:** The group was applying to Cllr Fleming's Locality Award scheme for a grant to do work to trees on Miller's Orchard.
- **Village Hall:** The hall was almost back to full use.

10.4 **Village Assets:** None.

10.5 **Public Rights of Way:** None.

10.6 **Highways Issues:** It was agreed to ask Tim Gaddis to move the VAS to the post near Bridewell Lane and record speeds there for a couple of weeks following some reports to councillors of speeding in that location. It was noted that there were problems arising from parents parking on The Fairstead for school drop off/pick up. The Clerk would write to the school and ask them to contact parents about it.

10.7 **Welcome Packs:** 1 to Cllr Bavington-Lowe.

11. **Finance**

11.1 **Account Balance:** £64,571.83
Income: £ 0.00

11.2 **Accounts for Payment:**

Admin Payments	£ 1,872.93	Not itemised due to GDPR
Street Sweeping etc.	£ 384.76	St Clean/Play Area/VAS Jun 21
Bryant Bros	£ 1,021.00	Village Assets Refurbishment
Community Workshop	£ 632.00	Botesdale Bugle Printing
Redgrave Parish Magazine	£ 25.00	Botesdale Bugle Distribution
SCC	£ 96.00	Highway Extent Request – Rec Ground
James Blake Associates	£ 3,366.00	Design Fees Recreation Ground

It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve payment of the accounts above.

12. **Matters for the next meeting of the Council:** None.

13. **Next Meeting:** 2 August 2021 (only if planning applications) and 6 September 2021

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:35 pm.