

MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING in BOXFORD

on Wednesday 1st April 2015 at 7.45 p.m. at Village Hall, Boxford.

PRESENT: See attached list. The meeting was chaired by Julian Fincham-Jacques (Chairman of the Parish Council) and Debbie Hattrell (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer) was also present. Around 33 parishioners including Councillors attended.

APOLOGIES: None were received.

MINUTES OF 7th April 2014: The acceptance of the previous Minutes was agreed subject to a name correction.

POLICE REPORT: PC Gary Austin gave the crime statistics for the Parish over the past year. There were 32 reported crimes: -

Assaults - 7 (2 detected)

Theft - 5

Taking without owners consent - 1

Public Order offences - 4 (2 detected)

Dwelling burglary - 1

Building burglary - 3

Criminal damage - 7

Other crimes - 4

He spoke of their initiatives and collaboration with neighbouring Counties. Crime prevention in respect of out buildings and keeping items out of sight was discussed. They had been working across Counties to detect dwelling burglaries. He concluded by mentioning the impact of cuts over the coming 2 to 3 years which will bring about significant changes.

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Councillor Bryn Hurren confirmed the District Council element of Council tax has not increased for the past 3 years. Central government grants are being phased out, so this is putting pressures on finances. He spoke of some of the innovative schemes at the District Council including installing solar panels on council houses. They are encouraging residents to recycle more and reduce waste in their black bins. Additionally, the brown bins generate significant income. Major sources of potential income include the new homes bonus and tourism. He outlined his own work on Committees including at the Quay Theatre. Local issues included the Tesco debate in Hadleigh, the solar farm proposal at Newton, Swan Street traffic and retention of a Post Office in the village. He concluded by thanking the Clerk and Council for support. He was then questioned further on the solar panel scheme.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: County Councillor James Finch confirmed Council tax increases for the County Council element have been frozen for 5 years despite the financial pressures. He spoke of improvement in educational attainment in the County. Further plans were being implemented to extend the roll out of superfast broadband. A drive to increase apprenticeships in the County and a new youth employment centre in Ipswich were mentioned. He spoke of the success of the energy from waste plant in Blakenham and finally the County's pledge to tackle mental health. He thanked the Chairman and Committee for welcoming him each month at the Parish Council Meetings. Following his report he was questioned about elderly care and education.

FINANCE: The Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer reported on the past years accounts showing expenditure at 95% of budget. The Grants given during the year were £2278 to the Church, £1772 to the Village Hall, £1083 to support the retention of the Post Office, £272 to the Scouts and Guides and £100 to Boxford Society. Monies continue to be set aside towards future Burials and Street Lighting. The 1st phase of the LED lantern upgrades had been completed with substantial savings achieved.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: The Chairman delivered the attached report. He outlined key achievements during the year and thanked his colleagues on the Council for all their support. He spoke of the various village organisations and businesses that enhance village life.

REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS: Reports were given by 3PR, Boxford United Charities and the Community Council. Whilst the help from the 3PR volunteers was again celebrated, the need for further volunteers was outlined. The Community Council had had another successful year with various village events.

GUEST SPEAKER: Nick Ward: The meeting gathered around information boards whilst Nick Ward, Head of Community Planning at the District Council shared information about Developments in Planning rules and laws and how a Neighbourhood Development Plan would fit in this process. A Neighbourhood plan would influence the type of development within the village. Boxford has been categorised as a core village which makes it sustainable in relation to services. The process of putting together a plan was discussed involving significant community engagement and specialist skills. Questions were taken throughout the presentation.

ELECTORS QUESTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS: Questions were brought relating to the contribution required from the developers at Sand Hill towards the school. The final numbers of affordable and private housing at Sand Hill were discussed. Other planning questions related to the Cygnet Court proposal.

At the end of the meeting, County Cllr J Finch proposed on behalf of the meeting a vote of thanks to the Chairman for all he does.

The meeting closed at 10.15pm.