

Notes from the Annual Parish Meeting held in April 2014

Those present: Mr. V Humphries (Chairman) Councillors: Mr. G Shrimpton, Mr. J Pawsey, Mrs. S Salmon, Ms. T Jackson, Ms. J Saunders (minute taker)

Those in attendance: Mr. R Kemp (County Councillor) Mr. J Long (District Councillor) and 18 visitors.

Apologies for absence: Mr. M Thew, Miss L Gregory (Clerk)

1. The Chairman welcomed those who attended and thanked all those who contributed to the work of the Council

2. **The minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting** held on 29th April 2013 were agreed and signed.

3. **Matters arising** from the minutes not captured in the agenda:

- The Coal House – brambles have been cleared by the owner following Babergh District Councillor involvement
- The 'phone box' – has been transformed to a library with thanks expressed to those who made this possible at such low cost to the community

4. Chairman's report

- Planning applications handled were listed
- Water flooding over road – following winter this stopped (discussed fully later in meeting)
- Speed of large vehicles damaging kerbs. Local hauliers have been contacted and want to be informed if their trucks are involved. Council have asked for speed monitors to be placed in the village; we are on the waiting list.
- Halifax Place and Streetfield Close resurfaced following reporting of potholes
- New trees, donated by Councillor Pawsey, planted in play area; new fencing to be placed around play area to prevent dog fouling
- WW memorial; discussions with Church following consideration of whether a second memorial should be erected – decided against (see further details below)
- Modifications to phone kiosk
- Close links with Village Hall committee and Shimpling Celebrates organising group
- Thanks expressed to District and County councillors & police
- Thanks to Marian Peck for her outstanding work as clerk (since resigned); thanks to new clerk Lucy Gregory
- Thanks to villagers who make Shimpling safe

5. Financial report

A detailed account of the financial year for Shimpling Parish Council was given by the Chairman.

Question from attendee: Congratulations expressed for the written notes however 'grass cutting' appears twice. It was clarified that only one entry referred to the village hall; to delete village hall (VH) from one of the entries.

£460 recycling income is new but decreasing next year before it ceases.

Question from attendee: What is the precept for the next year? **Action:** The clerk to inform Mr G Bonsom re precept for next year, after the meeting

6. **County Councillors report** 21st report from Richard Kemp.

- Suffolk has not increased council tax for 4 years; had to save £156million – 51% reduction in staffing to save money.
- Broadband – Suffolk awarded £5 million
- Locality Budget – Mr Kemp will continue to decide how used; has been used on village hall improvements

Question from attendee: Further detail requested to clarify the issues of water leaks onto the road.
A: When inspected the gulleys were not collecting water. Council noted it was coming off private land hence they could do nothing. There has been minimal rain which could account for no flooding since. Villagers noted in previous years the flooding has been directly linked to volume of rain.
Action: Mr Kemp will follow up the original request to attend to flooding.

7. **District Councillors report**

- Mr Long now chair of Babergh District Council (BDC).
- BDC improved response to planning applications last year to better than national average
- Scrap metal dealers have to be licenced now by District Councils
- Council tenants have had charges increased
- Housing needs of older people workshop November 2013; 50% increase in older people predicted.
- Troubled Families programme: aims that their children have better chances and reduce costs to public sector.
- Strategic (affordable) housing: 78 homes completed

Question from attendee: Are there local elections in May? A: no – but general election next year

8. **Reports:**

8.1. Halifax Trust – Allocation of funds made to Lawshall Primary School, 3 travel grants for transport to school, 8 bursaries to college students (5 locally), insulation to village hall, celebrations, drive to church and war memorial. Application deadline is September 2014 for next academic year

8.2. WI – varied educational events, trips and entertainment occurred throughout the year. 2015 is the centenary year for the movement.

8.3. Village Hall Committee – Their wide and varied achievements included: Shimpling Celebrates Committee now has younger members involved, St Georges Day meal, quizzes, pantomime, murder mystery. Income reduced last year as bottle bank income moved directly to Parish Council and some events had to be cancelled. Keep Fit has proved a great

success, now a Pilates group has started. Plan to dry line the storage room in the Hall to stop the damp. Balance increased by £900 and will be used for refurbishment

8.4. Shimpling and Alpheton PCC – Revd Ian Friars sadly had to leave his post. Interregnum held by dedicated local parishioners. Matthew Lawson to be new rector. His installation Service is open to all. The community activity included the Home Bible Study group and Munch Lunch group which has proved so useful to older residents. Fundraising events are always based around sociable projects. Looking forward to first church fete at Chadacre in many years. Marking WW1 & WW2 by a new memorial to be placed on the church inner wall; new design being created for a wood carving; to be dedicated on Remembrance Day 2014. 100 club to start to raise funds for the church. 15th May 2014 talk on local & sports journalism and life on the canal network.

9. **Police report and Neighbourhood Watch** – none presented

10. **Other matters**

10.1. Shimpling Celebrates – to fundraise for Help the Heroes

Sat 24 – 12 noon picnic and family scavenger hunt

- 8pm live music at Bush

Sun 25 – 11am brunch and rounders match and showing of the Karts

Mon 26 – 12 noon Karts judged at the Bush – walk to Slough Hill for start of racing

Tug of war and school sports at the Bush after the racing

10.2. Broadband improvements – Deadline 2017; 85% Suffolk having 2 megabits or higher. Bernard Essery offered to help any resident test if they can improve their broadband speed before the changes happen.

Question from attendee: who can be contacted to find out project progress? A: it is unclear.

Action: J Long will mention to R Kemp as to their ability to get an update

11. **Any other Business**

Question from attendee: Is there a project plan for the Coal House? A: no as doesn't belong to village. The aim was to tidy the area.

Question from attendee: Could the Council take over the Coal House? Attendees said overwhelmingly they did not want the council to write to the owner to ask him if he wanted to sell his Coal House.

Question from attendee: Japanese Knotweed; what is being done to eradicate it?

A: Babergh DC had declined to take action. Council are investigating. **Action:** To determine if reportable

Question from attendee: communication through minutes have proven problematic as content so succinct now. Council would be pleased to share draft and final versions by email. **Action:** Lucy Gregory to organise the draft minutes to go to Steve Cornelius for the website marked with 'draft' and 'not approved' – then to be followed up with ratified minutes.

Question from attendee: State of footpath No7 – irregular surface – difficult to walk along – a hazard. Needs to be improved. **Action:** Council agreed to write to county highways as soon as possible

13. The next Annual Parish Meeting: In the Village Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 27th April 2015.

The meeting closed at 21.40.