

MINUTES OF SWEFLING PARISH COUNCIL

Location: Sweffling Village Hut, The Street, Sweffling

Date and Time: Tuesday 13th June at 7.30 pm

1 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

The Chairperson (JT) welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Stephen Burroughs and Vince Langdon-Morris, County Councillor and District Councillor respectively. He also welcomed the members of the public and explained that the Council followed the guidelines published by NALG for the conduct of parish Council meetings

Ideally the council would prefer items for discussion/questions from residents to the Parish Council to be e-mailed to the Parish Clerk at least 8-10 days before the meeting so that they could be included on the agenda.

Present:

Councillor John Tesh (JT) Chairperson
Councillor Amanda Daniel (AD) Vice-Chairperson
Councillor Jill Abbott (JA)
Councillor Steve Ashurst (SA)
Councillor Audrey Lummis (AL)
Councillor Jenny Tyson (Jenny T)
Ann Dobson (Clerk to the Council)

Also:

Stephen Burroughs – Suffolk County Councillor
Vince Langdon-Morris – East Suffolk District Councillor
11 members of the public

Apologies:

Lindsey Jennings

2 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TO CONSIDER REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No declarations of interest or requests for dispensations were received.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- a) **The Minutes of the previous meeting** were unanimously agreed and then signed by the Chairperson (JT) as a true record.
- b) **Matters arising:**
It had been discussed at the previous meeting that a Safeguarding Officer would need to be appointed as the current officer had resigned. JT asked for volunteers and said the person would receive training. Councillor Burroughs explained that the role involved safeguarding in connection with vulnerable adults and children in the village. The Councillors wanted time to think about it and possibly speak with the previous Officer, so it was decided that this would be discussed again at the July meeting.
ACTION: The Clerk (ACD) would add to July Agenda.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- a) **County Councillor's Report:**
The Report had been previously circulated to the Councillors and added to the website so Councillor Stephen Burroughs did not go over it in detail again. He began by welcoming John Tesh as Chairperson and Vince Langdon-Morris as District Councillor. He then highlighted the main points of his report for the members of the public and the councillors. He said that Suffolk County Council had announced a support grant of £2,000 to help Ukrainian Refugees move from their host accommodation into their own accommodation. He mentioned a revised infrastructure policy to support water security in the region due to the changing climate. He said that the Council were committed to protect library services, none would be closing and an additional £720,000 a year was being offered until the current contract ends in July 2024, as these libraries were a hub for the whole community and no longer just about books. He gave an outline of a competition to create virtual reality films to support people with dementia and asked for this to be mentioned in the parish to see if anyone was interested in helping. Finally he said

that there were just under 1,000 children in care in Suffolk and more fostering was needed. One member of the public said she would be interested in this and was directed to the appropriate place to register her interest formally.

b) **District Councillor's Report**

Vince Langdon-Morris introduced himself as the 'Green' District Councillor for the Framlingham Ward. He apologised for his colleague Owen not being at the meeting due to illness. He mentioned that he was looking into the closure of Barclays in Framlingham and there are on-going discussions with Barclays about a possible pop-up bank, available for, hopefully, at least three days a week. It had not yet been decided where to place this but it was pointed out that this would need to be accessible for all. Councillor Langdon-Morris also said that his colleague Owen Grey was organising a 'Women in the Community' meeting in July and further details would be sent to the Parish Clerk for distribution to the Councillors and to go on the village noticeboard.

JT thanked both Councillors.

5 VILLAGE MATTERS

Jubilee Field

JT gave an overview of the current situation regarding the mower and the mowing schedule before any discussion took place. He said the mower had been fully serviced was now ready for use but was currently housed, securely, away from the field. Road use to get it to the field could need registration and insurance etc and any insurance would require the operators to be trained. Thomlinson Groundcare had been contacted and a training course is available at £200 plus expenses for a half day course. Various contractor options ranged from £680 to £1,000 a year but the problem with using a contractor booked with a fixed mowing schedule was that it did not always need doing, especially during prolonged dry periods. An offer has been received from a new contractor who was prepared to mow when necessary and this was being looked into. The Mowing schedule for 2023 was as follows: Early mowing was

not possible during the current year as planned due to very wet conditions. During May the Council followed the National/International recommendation of 'No Mow May' to aid survival of bees, pollinating insects and other wildlife. The main part of the field has now been cut three times and all play equipment strimmed around. It was now ready for more mowing as the weather dictated. Suffolk Wildlife Trust have recommended that the remaining wild flower area be cut in mid to late July and then the long grass would need to be raked off. Volunteers would be needed to assist with this. It would probably then need a second cut in late October but the intention was not to mow as low as the centre of the field. The schedule may need to be modified depending upon the weather.

After his overview, JT opened up questions and comments from the general public on this issue.

The opinion of a number of members of the public at the meeting, who live adjacent to the field, was that the wildflowers were being prioritised over the play area for the children but this was disputed by other members of the public. It was also stated that that the play area was not being kept in good order and there was not enough equipment particularly for young children. Councillor Burroughes said that if an application for more play equipment was made to Suffolk County Council he could certainly look at that and any requests should be made by email to the Parish Clerk.

There followed a lengthy discussion about volunteers helping to keep the field in good order and even using their own equipment to do so. This was all to be investigated further with the Council's insurers.

There was an opposing view put forward by one member of the public who said she had lived close to the Jubilee Field for over 30 years and had seen the field evolve during that time. She felt now that any new mowing schedule needed time to take effect, people would need to be patient, and that not all residents were against this new schedule. JT thanked her and said that indeed the majority of comments received from around the village had been very positive.

With regard to storing a lawnmower on site in a purpose built shed, a member of the public stated that she was unhappy about this shed being placed where the current concrete base was as this would threaten the security of her sheds too due to possible break ins etc. This was duly noted.

JT called a motion to see whether the Councillors were all in favour of keeping the mowing and wildlife schedule as currently. The Councillors agreed that everything was heading in the right direction, insects and wildlife were very important but so were the children of the Parish. Although the councillors are all familiar with the Field, (some visit daily), it was suggested they all meet there, to walk round together, and discuss the current situation.

ACTION: Clerk (ACD) to check with insurers on the public liability implications of members of the public using Council equipment or their own for the Jubilee Field.

ACTION: Councillors to check the Jubilee Field: mowing, equipment and benches to discuss further action.

Benches

JT reported that there had been 2 benches near the play area and one had been moved to the bottom of the field without the Parish Council knowledge. It then was moved back to the annoyance of some Jubilee Close residents. One bench currently needed repair and this was estimated at around £80 by Julian Rowe, who also advised that further repairs may be necessary at a later date and suggested that replacement might be better than repair. A new 8-seater bench would cost between £230-£280, flatpack. A member of the public said that one of the benches had belonged to John Stanley and had been donated to the field. There was then a discussion on whether a third bench was necessary and, if so, whether Stephen Burroughes would support this from SCC, but he said he thought that ascertaining the ownership of the existing benches would be the best first step and then ensuring that there were at least two good benches before thinking about a third. Another member of the public said that she had repaired the broken bench herself, which JT pointed out should not have happened as, if the repair failed and someone was injured the Parish Council would be liable. He appealed to everyone to direct any issues

regarding the Jubilee Field direct to the Parish Clerk for dealing with by the Parish Council.

ACTION: Clerk (ACD) to check the Asset Register and report at next meeting.

Footpath Signs

The poor condition of some of the footpath signs had been discussed at the last meeting and The Clerk (ACD) said that she had contacted Suffolk County Council Highways department and they were sending someone out to mend the specific ones mentioned and check the others.

Crime in the area

JT reported the theft of a valuable chair from Cransford Church and that other thefts had occurred in Rendham and Marlesford.

It was discussed that the Parish Council used to get regular updates from the local PCSO but this hadn't been happening for some time. It was also discussed that crime in the area was increasing. JA reported that she had attended the Suffolk Show and had met the new Community Engagement Officer, Amy Yeldham who seemed very proactive and keen to work with local parishes. Jenny T has been contacted regarding the re-establishment of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for local villages. Councillor Stephen Burroughes mentioned that there was also the East Suffolk Neighbourhood Scheme to advise.

ACTION: Clerk to make contact with Amy and report back.

Jenny T to update progress re. Neighbourhood Watch

Update on Finances for Coronation Celebration

JA confirmed that everything was now being sorted out in terms of this event and that all the costs were covered.

Details:

Income	
Cheque donation from Townland Trust	£150.00
Cheque donation from Alde Community Council	£50.00
Sales of beer (cash)	£114.50
Sales of tea (cash)	£9.40

TOTAL	£323.90
Expenditure	
Donation to Rendham PCC for marquee	£30.00
Beer Kegs (4 of 8)	£60.00
Temporary Event Licence	£21.00
TOTAL	£111.00

In addition, 50 Coronation Mugs purchased @ £6.00 each TOTAL £300.00
Most have been distributed free to the 40+ children (under 18) in the village.
The rest are being sold and when completed, there will be a small profit to
hand to the next PC meeting.

JT thanked Jill for all her hard work with regard to the celebration.

6 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications to discuss.

7 FINANCES

AD reported that all the finances were gradually being handed over to ACD.
There were a few invoices to be paid and cheques would be raised at the end
of the meeting.

AD reported that the Audit was booked for w/c 10th July and once the Audit
had taken place the VAT side of things would be sorted out.

8 CORRESPONDENCE

a) 20's Plenty for Us Campaign

Councillors had been sent a report on this initiative and it was agreed
that some sort of calming measures would be good in the village centre
and along the B1119. Unfortunately the proposed 20 mph zones do not
appear to be enforceable by the police. The first step would be a speed
survey and Councillor Burroughes suggested we send an email to him
and he would pursue this for us. Councillor Langdon-Morris also
explained that 20 mph zones were being introduced in "Quiet Lanes" and

the police were planning surveillance in these. JA and SA said they felt this would be really beneficial to Sweffling.

ACTION: Clerk (ACD) to send an email to Councillor Stephen Burroughes asking for a survey to take place.

b) SARS report and donation request

There was no support for a donation at this time.

c) Transport East Survey

JA said that there had been a survey sent round and because Sweffling PC didn't have a Clerk at the time, the deadline for entry had passed. She was going to see if the Parish could submit a 'late entry'.

ACTION: JA to see if a late entry would be acceptable and look at what other villages had said if possible.

9 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR

A member of the public raised the question of why the website had been changed to a new website last year. JT said that it was a decision taken by the Parish Councillors at the time but the member of the public wanted to know the reasoning behind it. AD said that there is now someone who moderates the new website and updates it very frequently and it is working very well indeed. The member of the public was advised to send an email to the Parish Clerk if she wanted to pursue any further.

10 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Next meeting to be held on Tuesday 11th July at 7.30 pm at The Village Hut in Sweffling.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm.