

**Minutes of the Bruisyard Annual Parish Meeting held
on Monday 14 May 2012 at 7pm in the Bruisyard Village Hall**

Apologies for absence: Thelma Barham

1. Parish Council Chairman's Report

Chairman welcomed everybody and thanked all for coming. Chairman reported that the year started well with usual events taking place. However, the year ended on a low with the Bruisyard Hall licence application upheaval. Hopefully, things are getting better. The new parish clerk started in February this year. If anyone needs to contact the parish clerk please email clerk@bruisyard.com.

- a) **Council members:** Peter Robinson, John Marten, John McKee, Jeremy Holland-Howes, Teresa Barham and James Ingmire. Chairman informed the meeting there was one councillor's vacancy at the moment. Council received two applications which will be discussed at the next parish council meeting.
- b) **Charity Donations:** the council makes donations to the following four charities: Disability Advice Centre, Citizens Advice Bureau, Accident & Rescue Service, AGE UK.
- c) **Precept for 2012:** £2100
- d) **Rural Coffee Caravan** goes around the village, mainly used as information sharing point, such as information on charity, information for farmers, information for older people.
- e) **Wine Tasting:** Friday 11 May Village Hall hosted wine tasting session, event was attended by 28 people with £198 raised.
- f) **Other events:** Jubilee celebrations will take place on Tuesday 5 June on the grounds of Village Hall, in the next few days all Bruisyard residents will be getting note through the door regarding this. The visitors will enjoy free hog roast and all children will get a Jubilee mugs.
- g) **Play Area:** nothing has been done about the area. The council has to decide if the village needs a play area at the moment, given the fact that there aren't many local children who can use it.

2. Village Hall Report, given by Peter Robinson, Chairman of Parish Council.

Village Hall has been busy, 323 functions in the village hall in the last 12 months. Sometimes a few functions a day, including Pilates and tea & biscuits get meetings. Financially Village Hall is well off, but more money is always welcome. Few people stood down from the committee so more people are welcome to put their name forward to join the committee. As of 31 March 2012 the bank balance of the Village Hall account is £5202.91. Painting of the Village Hall was a major expense at £400 in total. Also the repair cost to the boiler after it broke down was £240. There are a lot of regular events taking place.

David Smith, ex-secretary of the Village Hall committee explained to the council why he had decided to stand down. Firstly, David was involved with the Parish Plan in 2005 which led to him being involved with the Village Hall. The project was about building community and social cohesion. Hundreds of hours went into preparing and submitting funding applications for the Village Hall to be built and during the building process. When those letters were distributed around the village in autumn 2011 it was very disappointing. The way it was handled in the village brought a lot of unhappiness. All the hard work has been undone in an instant.

Secondly, the letter that was sent around the village was libellous. It is hard enough to get people to volunteer and this kind of treatment of those who do volunteer makes it even more difficult. Anne

Smith volunteered as the Parish Clerk for 10 years and it is unthinkable that she gets this kind of treatment. The meeting agreed that the person or persons responsible for the libellous letter should be ashamed of their actions and that this sort of behaviour will never be tolerated.

3. Bruisyard Social Amenities Committee, report given by John McKee

- a) **Report and Accounts:** £1919.10 in the bank. The Committee received a grant. During Jubilee celebrations in the village there will be a hog roast and all children in the village will get a Jubilee mugs regardless of whether they attend. John McKee thanked everyone for their donations.
- b) **Elections:** all members of the committee have agreed to stand again. If anyone else wants to join the committee they are welcome to register their interest.

4. Bruisyard Young People, report given by John Marten, Vice-Chairman

The club has now been running for two years and currently has 20 members, quite a few from Framlingham. At the recent yearly fundraising event £285 was made. £85 was donated to Jubilee celebrations and the rest transferred to the club's bank account. Some of the money was spent on an iPod docking station and some on an air hockey.

5. Police Report, PCSO Christian Hassler sent the following report for the meeting.

From 14/05/2011 to 14/05/2012 there have been 4 reported crimes.

Crime Reduction Advice

In light of the recent Burglaries to out buildings that have occurred in near by villages The Police are urging householders to keep their property locked and secured where possible. Not to leave anything out on display to make you an easy target for any would be opportunist thefts. Some easy deterrents are to lock doors and windows don't leave any unattended items in view from a window. Move rubbish bins away from garden gates so that you are not providing easy access in to your garden. If you own a dog no matter how big or small it is or even if you don't own a dog put up signs stating beware of the dog or signs saying this area is covered by CCTV. There are also signs from house alarm companies for purchase that can be put up. These are just a few suggestions that are available to you which are not guaranteed to stop you being a victim of crime but just may make someone think twice about breaking into your property.

6. District and County Councillors' Report

District Councillor Graham Peck's Report:

The financial climate over the last twelve months has created difficult conditions for SCDC and it has been necessary to reduce costs in order to ensure that local taxes could be maintained at last year's levels. Careful trimming has created savings of over £2million nevertheless the District Council has managed to introduce a number of notable service improvements.

Environment - Recycling of household waste has been very successful with 59% of the total being recycled. This has resulted in SCDC ranking 8th out of 358 councils for the least amount of rubbish going to landfill. The main part of the Central Felixstowe Coastal Defence Project has now been completed following £10 million funding from the Environment Agency and the Thorpeness coastal protection works have also been completed having received £431K from the Environment Agency.

Community Wellbeing - The Suffolk Coastal Resource network has gained in excess of £500K for local projects and now supports over 400 community groups. The loft clearance scheme has been effective in helping vulnerable people to obtain free insulation. Crime rates have been reduced to 26 per 1000 population representing a 7% reduction from the 2009/10 figures and we are now the safest Community Safety Partnership in Suffolk. Our leisure centres have been 'highly commended' for customer service and facilities in the national scheme.

Economy - The local schools project has supported events to help young people to get jobs locally and as an example Leiston School brought 100 students together with 14 local employers. A combined bid with Waveney is underway to promote an £800K scheme offering rural business advice and grants aimed at cutting energy use. 90% of the district's food businesses have been rated in the top two levels for hygiene. £2million of funding has been secured from Central Government in order to support jobs and economic growth.

Housing - SCDC is now in the top 25% of Councils nationally for processing new housing benefit claims and changes of circumstances. The LDF Core Strategy has committed to facilitate the additional homes and jobs that the District needs for the future and in parallel with this the District Council is also working to bring the many empty homes back into use.

Service Efficiency - The sharing of resources with Waveney District Council has permitted substantial savings to be made which in turn have reduced the operating overheads. There are now one third fewer senior managers serving both Councils and over 500 posts have been reduced since 2003. A review of the Wards is also planned that will result in fewer District Councillors being required.

The economic climate continues to offer many challenges however SCDC are committed to maintaining service levels with no or minimal increases in costs to the public.

County Councillor Colin Hart's Report:

As in previous years the single most significant challenge facing the County Council this year has been, and will continue to be finance.

Around half of all the County Council's income comes from government grant. The other half comes largely from council tax. Shortly after taking office the government announced that it was cutting the local government grant by almost a third over the following three years. We are now in year two of those three years.

Faced with that loss of income Suffolk County Council had to make fairly severe spending cuts. In year 1 we cut spending by some £43 million. This year we cut by further £23 million and it is planned that similar savings will be made next year.

As a result of Year 1 savings a number of services were either reduced or curtailed. This did not make us particularly popular but we were able to balance the budget and freeze council tax – something we did again this year.

This year the difference is that we have not had to affect services. Instead we have reduced the size of the organisation – by and large through early retirement, voluntary redundancy or transferring people from the county council's payroll to those of organisations that have taken on the running of services we used to run directly.

Next year I expect that the process to continue with a phased reduction in the number of people directly employed by the county council as we transfer out services and functions such as facilities management, care homes, transport, highways, libraries, archives and archaeological service.

We now have a new chief executive, Deborah Cadman, and a new council leader, Mark Bee, who have the challenging task of managing all this change.

As a result of the leadership change last May, I have had a new job for the past year as chairman of the Scrutiny Committee. This has been interesting, not least because I have been attempting, with a degree of success, to change the way the Scrutiny operates and look at issues before decisions are taken by Cabinet. As a result I hope I have done something to give some if not all backbenchers a greater degree of influence over the decision-making process.

Looking ahead, life is not going to get any easier for local government. We may well be facing further cuts in grant after 2013 and I would not like to forecast what the future holds as far as council tax is concerned. Central government remains the paymaster of local government and to a great extent still decided what we have to do, though leaving us some freedom as to how to do it.

I had hoped that 'localism' would mean that the relationship between central and local government would change more radically. But from what I understand of the Localism Bill I have been somewhat disappointed in those hopes.

For that and for a number of personal and family reasons I have therefore informed my party that I do not wish to be considered for re-approval as their candidate in next year's elections to the county council.

Questions from the floor:

Paul Church took the floor to inform the Council that in two years time there won't be Saxmundham middle school. It will be Saxmundham free school. It will be 11-16 school and will open in September 2012 with year groups 7, 8 and 9 (from children aged 11 to 14). It will grow by a year group each year until September 2014, when years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 will be on roll. Anybody in Bruisyard should qualify to go to Framlingham or Saxmundham. School will measure the distance between your house and school and if the distance is over 3 miles the students will be entitled to go to Leiston, but parents will have to pay for transport. Parents can either take their children to school themselves or apply to the council for funding.

John question: in the future of there is a cataclysmic situation should the parish council decide the fate of the matter or should the residents of the village be involved too? If a certain matter affects the majority of the village then perhaps there should be a questionnaire going put to all 75 households asking their opinion. Then the parish council can base their decision on the majority opinion of the village.

Winifred Higgins has taken to floor to express her concern over the goings on in the village. She pointed out that some people in the village are frightened to come forward to express their opinion after the libellous letters were distributed in Bruisyard. She gets a feeling that if you have not lived in the village long than your opinion matters less. It is important that people understand that making those comments in the letters were wrong and it tarnishes the reputation of the village.

Robert Rous reported that 2 events are planned at Bruisyard Hall: one took place last weekend and was quiet. Another one is taking place on Wednesday night, 140 people are expected to attend with 40-50 cars.

James Ingmire has said that we now need to move on from what happened. But there is a need to maintain sensible dialogues between the residents of Bruisyard and Robert Rous and Paul Dawes. Sensible thing to do will be to have a committee that can sit down and work through any issues that might exist in the village. In the past 6 months there have been so many conversations and opinions that it is hard to make sense of what the general opinion is. Having a sub committee to discuss this and any other potential issues in the village could go a long way towards returning Bruisyard to normal.

There being no further questions from the floor the Chairman announced the meeting closed at 20.05.