

**Minutes of Combs Parish Council and Annual Meeting
Monday 7 July 2019 at 7.10pm, Battisford Village Hall, Straight Road, Battisford**

(DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED)

Present: S Scarff (Chairman); D Thorpe (Councillor); J Crooks (Councillor); T Chaplin (Councillor); V Whitehead (Councillor); K Oakes (County Councillor); J Matthissen (District Councillor); T Bamber (clerk). Mr Ian Walker (putative new councillor); Three members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

C Todhunter (Vice Chairman);

2. Declarations of interest

None

3. Public Forum

Other than for item 10(a) (ii) no members of public wished to speak.

4. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 10 June 2019

Minutes for 10 June 2019 were reviewed and were signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting by the Chairman.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

It was pointed out, in connection with item 6, that faded speed signs was an issue not limited solely to Combs. Other than that there were no matters arising that are not covered elsewhere

6. County Councillor's Report

The Councillor's monthly report is attached as appendix 1.

Cllr Oakes reported there had been some progress regarding faded speed signs and that the Council's Health & Safety team were looking into the matter.

In response to a question, Cllr Oakes confirmed that, in the case of overgrown hedges affecting roads and footpaths, the clerk should write to the homeowner reminding them of their responsibility in the first instance. Should the problem persist, Cllr Oakes will advise on the best course of action. It was agreed that before the clerk writes, the matter could be raised in the next newsletter.

Action: Newsletter to include reminder about overgrown hedges


7. District Councillor's Report

The Councillor's monthly report is attached as appendix 2.

The District Councillor invited applications for use of his locality budget. He also reported that so far he had been unable to locate a disinterested tree surgeon but was still looking.

8. Parish Council Chairman's Report

No matters not raised elsewhere.



9. Clerk's Report

No matters not raised elsewhere.

10. Planning

- a. Applications received for consideration
 - i. DC/19/02739 - 3 dwellings Jockeys Hall, Jockeys Lane– Outline Planning Application. (deadline extended to 10 July). It was AGREED to respond with the same points as mentioned previously, but with additional comment regarding the remarks made by applicants in respect of traffic.
 - ii. DC/19/02677 Gardeners Arms, Moats Tye – Full Planning Application for new lobby/store/wc etc. M B Pearce, the applicant, explained that he had received confirmation from Planning that any building used as a dwelling for 4 years need not be required to apply for change of use from previous use as a public house. Councillors were disappointed that the village's only public house had been lost without it being clear to the public that this was the case. Nevertheless they recognised the right of the applicant to act in his interest. Mr Pearce observed that planning rules would allow him to use the building as a public house for up to 30 days a year without any planning requirement and suggested that this may occur on suitable weekends. The Council agreed that no objection be raised.
 - iii. DC/19/03064 Moats Tye Hall – change of use from office use to dwellinghouse. *No Objection.*
- b. Decisions received from MSDC
 - i. DC/19/01837 The Barn, Holy Oak Farm, Church Rd – conversion of agricultural building – *granted.* Noted
 - ii. DC/19/02441 &2 – Star Cottage, Moats Tye – Annex to existing accommodation *Approval of conditions and listed building consent – granted.* Noted
 - iii. DC/19/006622 – Erection of 138 dwellings East of Poplar Hill – *refused* Noted
 - iv. DC/19/02322 – 9 Dwellings North East of Bowl Road – *reserved matters approved.* Noted

11. Finance

- a. **Accounts review to date** – Current Account balance as of 26 June 2019 was £12,427.24 and the savings account balance as of 1 July 2019 was £1,914.07.

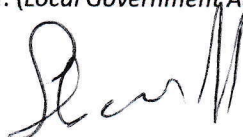
The Budget analysis and financial summary were reviewed and accepted.

- b. **Payments received**

- i. T/L Robert & Maria Hodge –inscription - £ 100.00

- c. **Payments to hand**

- i. EON (Direct debit) - £ 76.39 Approved by all councillors (*Parish Councils Act 1957, S.3; Highways Act 1980 S.301*)
 - ii. D Windle – Cemetery grass cutting -£ 807.50. Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22208 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff. (*Local Government Act 1972, s214,215*).



12. Co-opting of new Councillor

The chairman introduced Mr. Ian Walker, who was attending to experience a council meeting. It was AGREED that, should Mr. Walker remain interested, he be formally co-opted at the next meeting.

13. Litter Collection Service

Cllr Crooks expressed disappointment that he has recently seen Council recycling lorries shedding litter behind them as they drove along, due to the plastic curtains being either broken or held back. Given the effort the villagers put into keeping the village tidy this is unacceptable. It was AGREED that the clerk write to the recycling department (copy to the District Councillor) expressing the Council's concern.

Action: Clerk to write to Recycling Department

14. Grants & Fundraising

Cllr Whitehead observed that further action would be dependent on the outcome of the survey. She also mentioned that, if further consideration were to be given to the idea of the village acquiring its own village hall, it may be possible to seek CIL funding from development in neighbouring parishes.

Cllr Chaplin reported that nearly 100 survey forms had been returned and that she will collate the responses in time for the next newsletter.

15. Speed Signs

The Clerk reported that in order to proceed, the manufacturers required:

- a) A high quality pdf of the village sign
- b) Confirmation of the message required

For a) it was suggested the Clerk approach Ian Clark and for b) the phrase 'please drive considerately' was suggested.

Following the decision to seek an additional location for the device in the Slough, the Chairman confirmed that he would contact the landowner for permission.

The Chairman suggested that councillors consider the wording and that the Clerk canvass councillors' views on return from his holiday.

County Councillor Kay Oakes confirmed that she would arrange a contribution of £2,000 towards the cost of the device: the Chairman thanked the councillor on behalf of the council and the village and said that due recognition would be shown in publicity.

Action:

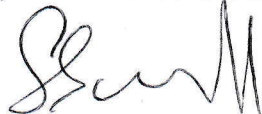
- I. **Clerk to seek better quality PDF of village sign and to email councillors regarding the phrase to be printed on the sign.**
- II. **Chairman to speak with landowner regarding siting of SID pole in the Slough**

16. Street Lights

Nothing to report

17. Parish Newsletter

Cllr Chaplin reported that the deadline for the next newsletter was 1 September.



18. Diseased Tree, Webbs Close

There having been no response to the letter sent by the clerk on 3 June to the owners of the land (Landlink), it was AGREED that a further letter be sent by recorded delivery.

Action: Clerk to write recorded delivery to Landlink

19. Combs Cemetery

It has been noted that several graves are becoming cluttered with ornaments and unsightly detritus that is not permitted under the cemetery rules. It was AGREED that the clerk be instructed to write to the recorded owners of those graves, reminding them of the regulations and advising that all inappropriate decorations will be removed within a month if not already cleared by the owners.

Action: clerk to write to owners of graves.

20. St Mary's Churchyard

- (i) Table tomb: The clerk reported that a faculty to dismantle the tomb would cost £200 but it may be possible to avoid this by providing the diocese's lawyers with full details of the proposed action and clear photographs of the tomb as it is. Cllr Thorpe and the Chairman will work with the clerk on this.

Action: Chairman and Cllr Thorpe to visit the tomb and with the clerk draw up a clear proposal for the diocese.

21. Correspondence

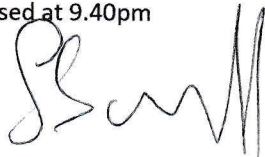
The Council has been advised that the only bus servicing the village may cease as the County Council are withdrawing funding. The bus only passes through the village twice a week and it seems very few villagers utilise it. Cllr Oakes offered to speak with any villagers who felt concerned about this.

22. Any other business – potentially for inclusion on the next agenda

Nothing to report

23. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 9 September 2019 at 7.30pm

The Meeting closed at 9.40pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Smith', is written below the text 'The Meeting closed at 9.40pm'.

County Council report – July 2019

New electric vehicle charging points to be installed in Suffolk

Electric vehicle charging points will be installed at Suffolk Business Park in Bury St Edmunds.

Currently under construction, Suffolk Business Park in Bury St Edmunds has announced that it will explore ways of working with Plug In Suffolk, the UK's first fully open public electric vehicle (EV) fast charging network. Installing EV charging points at the site will be an incentive for potential tenants, customers and visitors.

Plug In Suffolk, launched earlier this year, is a project run in partnership with Suffolk County Council, Stowmarket-based EO Charging, and renewable energy provider, Bulb. It aims to install up to 400 EV charging points across the county at 100 business premises, car parks, hotels and anywhere that EVs could park for a short amount of time. This will make Suffolk a national leader in EV infrastructure.

The fast charging points supplied by Plug In Suffolk do not require any registration, membership or apps - drivers simply park, plug-in and charge using contactless payment.

The overall cost to businesses is negligible and, if used regularly, can even generate a small income. For further information or to apply to join the 'Plug In Suffolk' network head to www.pluginsuffolk.org

Conversations start as county council seeks solutions to bus funding challenge

On 19 June, Suffolk County Council met with representatives from Suffolk's bus operators to see whether they can run a number of bus services without public subsidy. This follows a reduction in the amount of public money available.

The meeting, involving 11 of Suffolk's biggest bus operating companies, follows decisions taken in February 2019 on how to save £13 million from Suffolk County Council's budget, including £340,000 from the authority's passenger transport budget.

This led to a cross-party policy development panel being set up to agree how decisions should be made about the funding of services. A new, fair and thorough set of criteria was adopted in May 2019, including passenger numbers, subsidy per single ticket, integration with other services, the number of entitled students using a service, and the percentage of journeys made by concessionary pass holders.

Of the 211 bus routes currently operating throughout Suffolk, 61 are subsidised by public money. 23 of these will have their public funding removed. This does not mean that these services will necessarily end, just that public funding is no longer affordable.

In 2017/18, the 23 services were responsible for 107,624 single journeys out of a total of 14.9million journeys made across the county. This means that the services are responsible for only 0.7% of journeys per year.

A full list of the affected routes has been published on Suffolk County Council's website www.suffolkonboard.com and includes services where the council is currently paying a subsidy of £12.64 per single ticket which equates to over £25.00 per round trip.

Councillor Mary Evans, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Issues said:

"We need to ensure we spend public money effectively. In reviewing these services against our new funding criteria, we have had to make tough decisions. However, the implementation of the new criteria has enabled these decisions to be made in a robust and transparent way and ensures we consider key measures before making tough calls."

"We are committed to working with bus operators and partners to explore other sources of funding to support these services once SCC funding ceases. We are also open to conversations with community groups and partners to see if local solutions can be developed."

"I recognise the importance of passenger transport and I remain committed to ensuring that Suffolk's residents have access to it."

Following conversations with bus operators and partners, the county council will review the situation at the end of July 2019 before determining next steps. The council aims to have operators taking on these services on a commercial basis from the end of October.

Suffolk pothole repair scheme to go countywide

A trial scheme to tackle potholes swiftly has been so successful it is being rolled out across Suffolk.

The Suffolk Highways scheme, which started in Ipswich in October 2018, changes how potholes are categorised.

The new system allows engineers to repair potholes close to each other during the same visit, tackling smaller potholes before they can expand. Previously, they fixed larger holes first and smaller ones at a later date. The new policy reduces the amount of time workers have to travel between jobs.

Mary Evans, Cabinet Member for Highways on Suffolk County Council, said the scheme would be rolled out permanently across the county this summer.

She said the previous system had been "incredibly complicated", leading to highways workers complaining that they were "driving over potholes to get to potholes".

Mrs Evans said: "The rate you pay the gangs is the same whatever they do, and the material they put in the pothole is the same, so the efficiency savings comes from the travel time.

"I am really pleased - it's about looking at ways the system can be more efficient."

District Councillor Report: Onehouse ward

July 2019

Draft Joint Local Plan	A preliminary copy of the draft Joint Local Plan was published as part of the papers for the Council meeting on 27 th June. This is the Regulation 18 version and includes maps of allocated sites and settlement boundaries. It has now been agreed that the Draft Joint Local Plan will go out for a 10 week public consultation in July. Our amendment was passed to allow ward members to engage with the Planning Policy team to make some minor changes to the settlement boundary and site allocations maps in the next week.
Councillor Locality Budget	Another round of Councillor Locality Budgets has been launched. Each member has £7,350 to allocate to community projects and groups in their ward. The closing date for applications is 31 st January and any community group wishing to apply for funding needs to contact the ward member. The minimum award amount is £250 and any grant awarded must meet one of the Council's strategic objectives.
Bin collection day change	In order to optimise bin collection routes there will be some changes to bin collection days from July. The new schedule was published on 1 st July and the new routes will become operational week commencing 15 th July.
Housing delivery test action plan	As part of the Government's housing reform a Housing Delivery Test has been introduced to monitor house building within local areas. The Council has to publish a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan because it was only meeting 81% of the target figure. Some of the recommended actions include better engagements with developers of stalled sites. This action plan was agreed by Council on 27 th June.
Stowupland Neighbourhood Plan	Stowupland Neighbourhood plan held its referendum earlier on 6 th June. The results showed a 92% vote in favour of the plan and it was adopted as planning policy by Council on 27 th June. This is the fourth neighbourhood plan to be adopted in the district.
New directors for CIFCO	Three new directors for MSDC (Suffolk Holdings) Ltd. The directors are now Cllrs Gerard Brewster, Rick Meyer, Peter Gould and Paul Ekpenyong.

Councillor John Matthissen