

RISBY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7th January 2016

Councillors present: Derrick Abrey (Chairman), Simon Gray, Jill Gray, Julian Reed, Chris Sutton and Steve Smith,

Also present: Borough Councillor Susan Glossop, County Councillor Becky Hopfsenberger and 3 members of the public

The following issues were raised during the Open Forum

- The Saturday morning bus which has now been removed, despite having been well used, and replaced by an afternoon bus which is hardly used as there is no return bus until 6pm
- The road surface in front of Gage Cottage on The Green is getting broken up by lorries
- The broken up pavement in School Road. Suffolk County Council says it does not meet their criteria for repair.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda.

3. Approval of minutes of meeting held on Thursday 5th November 2015

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. Report from District Councillor Susan Glossop

Susan Glossop spoke about the following:

- The contract for the composting of brown waste is up for renewal
- There will be a charge of £40 from April for brown bins to be emptied. Everyone will be contacted and if residents do not want it, it will be taken away. It will not be added to the Council Tax, but will probably be invoiced separately.
- The West Suffolk Operational Hub. The consultation will start on 8th January.

5. Police Report

There have been no crimes of interest since the last meeting. The Suffolk Policing Review was announced on 4th December. Key changes include:

- Streamlined processes for the investigation of crime.
- A redefined remit for Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) and a reduction in their number from 29 to 18, with a focus on addressing community concerns.
- Three revised policing areas in the East, West and South.
- Nine policing 'locality' areas, combining emergency response, investigations, SNTs, volunteers and the Special Constabulary.
- A revised workforce mix removing 68 PCSO posts from the organisation.
- The closure of a number of police station front counters, leaving three public access points in Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft.

The full report can be found on the Suffolk Constabulary website.

6. Update on the list of actions since the last meeting

There were no outstanding councillor actions.

7. Finance

a) Approval of payments and signing of the Schedule of Payments

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- HMRC - PAYE - LGA 1972, s111 - **£46.20**
- J P Ince expenses – LGA 1972, s111 - **£6.32**
- Acting Returning Officer West Suffolk Constituency - charge for an uncontested election - LGA 1972, s111 - **£21.34**

Chris Sutton and Steve Smith signed the Schedule of Payments and Derrick Abrey countersigned it.

b) Approval of the record of online payments made since the last meeting

It was resolved that the record of online payments would be approved. Chris Sutton then signed it.

c) Checklist of Internal Controls

Chris Sutton completed the checklist of internal controls.

d) Statement of receipts and payments made since the last meeting

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments was correct.

e) Approval of the final budget for 2016/17 and signing of the Parish Estimates form

It was resolved that the budget would be approved. As a result of St Edmundsbury Borough Council's cut in the Parish Revenue Support Grant and the Local Council Tax Support Grant, the amount received from the Borough Council has reduced by a further £800 in addition to the £800 reduction last year. This decrease has had a serious impact on the Parish Council's budget. In order to minimise the impact on the amount householders pay as part of their Council Tax bills, the Parish Council has looked at ways to reduce its spending whilst maintaining a healthy reserve.

It was resolved that the precept request would be £9,169 an increase of 2.73% which equates to £0.86 per band D property. The Chairman and clerk then signed the Parish Estimates form.

f) Changes to the audit regime in 2016/17

From 2017 smaller authorities with a turnover of less than £25,000 will be exempt from having to submit an annual financial return, but will still need to have an auditor appointed in case there are questions from electors to be resolved.

From the start of the 2017/18 parish councils can choose to have an auditor appointed to them by a new 'sector-led body (SLB)' or they can decide to procure their own. Those smaller authorities who wish to participate in the SLB do not need to do anything as all smaller authorities are automatically opted in to the new body and will have an auditor procured for them.

A small fee will be charged for this to cover the whole five year period and will be payable before the start of the new audit arrangements in April 2017. The one-off SLB fee is estimated to be less than £100, however this may be subject to change as the SLB is set up.

All authorities who wish to opt out must make their own arrangements with auditors, which will include but is not limited to the following:

- establishing an Auditor Panel;
- following a statutory appointment process set out in regulations;
- appointing an auditor by 31 December 2016;
- providing the SLB with the contact details of your auditor.

It was resolved that Risby Parish Council would not opt out of the Sector Led Body scheme.

g) Anglian Water bill for the allotments

The bill for the period from 2nd October to 29th December was £105.05 which is significantly more than in previous months. The meter was read in December 2015 but estimated in October in October 2015 which may explain the large bill, however the total usage in 2014/15 was £107.38 compared to £188.00 so far in 2015/16.

Chris Sutton agreed to look into this and report back at the next meeting.

8. Report from County Councillor Becky Hopfsenberger

Becky Hopfsenberger spoke about the following:

- Repairs to the footway in Woodland Close. Highways is planning some footway re-construction works, this will include the accesses leading to properties. This work will hopefully be completed during early spring.
- Charlie Mitson will meet Derrick Abrey and Becky Hopfsenberger on Friday 22nd January to look at outstanding Highways issues in Risby.
- The West Suffolk Operational Hub.
- Suffolk County Council's budget consultation. The Chancellor has announced the ability for councils responsible for social care to increase the precept by 2% for adult and social care. This equates to £22.50 per band D property and is likely to be introduced by Suffolk County Council. Unfortunately this increase will not even cover salary rises following the introduction of the living wage.

9. Planning

DC/15/2575/FUL - 24 South St, Risby - 1 dwelling with off street parking (resubmission of DC/15/0062/FUL)

Notification of this application had only just been e-mailed to the Parish Council. As the previous application was approved by the Council, it was resolved that councillors would review the application once the paper copy has been received to see whether there are any changes which may influence their previous decision.

10. Highways/rights of way matters/tree or transport issues:

a) Update on the progress of the Vehicle Activated Signs

The signs have been applied for, but will take up to 14 weeks to be installed.

b) Outstanding highways issues

A meeting has been arranged with Highways engineer Charlie Mitson to discuss outstanding Highways issues.

c) Painting of the phone box

The kit to paint the phone box has now arrived. It was resolved that Chris Sutton would obtain a quote for the work and that the clerk would contact BT about replacing the broken glass.

d) Woodland Close

Highways is planning to carry out some footway re-construction works which will include the accesses leading to properties. This work will hopefully be completed during early spring.

e) Saturday bus service to Bury St Edmunds

It was resolved that the Clerk would write to Suffolk County Council and copy Becky Hopfsenberger in to complain about the removal of the 10am bus service which was always popular and replaced with an afternoon service which is rarely used as the earliest bus back to Risby is at 6pm.

f) Potholes and road surface in Welham Lane

The clerk has reported the broken road surface and potholes in Welham Lane. Suffolk County Council has responded saying that the damage does not meet their criteria for repair. It was resolved that Derrick Abrey would discuss this at his meeting with Highways.

g) Damaged road surface outside Gage Cottage

It was resolved that Derrick Abrey would discuss this at his meeting with Highways.

11. Dates of parish council meetings from May 2016 - March 2017

- Thursday 5th May 2016
- Thursday 7th July 2016
- Thursday 1st September 2016
- Thursday 3rd November 2016
- Thursday 5th January 2017
- Thursday 2nd March 2017

12. Community Ranger Scheme

A local resident has expressed an interest in taking part in the scheme. It was resolved that the clerk would contact Susan Glossop to find out how to proceed with setting up a scheme.

13. To discuss the possibility of setting up a dementia friendly community and a Good Neighbour scheme

No response was received to the article in the December newsletter, however because December is a busy month, it was resolved that a separate article would be included in the next newsletter.

14. Correspondence:**a) Letter from the Police about match funded PCSOs**

The Council received an e-mail from Suffolk Constabulary on 18th December notify them that due to budget cuts 68 PCSO posts will be removed in 2016/17 and offering parish councils an opportunity to fund (or part-fund) 6 match funded PCSO's.

It was resolved that no funds would be made available as the budget for 2016/17 has already been set and resources are already limited due to cuts in grants from St Edmundsbury Borough Council. Concern was also expressed at the fact that the letter was received just before the Christmas Break along with an invitation to attend a meeting on 6th January. Such a short time scale did not allow for the proposals to be discussed at a full council meeting as the January agenda had already been circulated.

b) Letter from Chief Fire Officer re fire service consultation

The Parish Council has received a letter from Chief Fire Officer, Mark Hardingham, about proposed changes to the fire service. Although Wickhambrook Fire Station will not be affected, changes are proposed in Bury St Edmunds. There are three fire engines there at present, one crewed by full-time fire fighters and two crewed by on-call fire fighters. The proposal is to remove one on-call crewed fire engine resulting in a saving of £72,000 per annum.

It was resolved that the Council would respond to the consultation and oppose the changes in Bury St Edmunds as the proposals do not take into account the increasing population of Bury when new developments are built and the additional pressure on the A14.

c) Letter from West Suffolk re consultation on West Suffolk Operational Hub for managing waste

It was resolved that the clerk would update the Council once further information is made available on 8th January and that she would produce a flyer once more information is known giving details of the public meeting on 29th January.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed (Chairman) Dated