

# GISLINGHAM

## ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

*Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting held at Gislingham Village Hall on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019.*

**Host: Julie Bell, Chair of Gislingham Parish Council**

The meeting was preceded by a talk on the "Good Neighbour Scheme" by Community Action Suffolk

### AGENDA

- 1 To receive Suffolk County Councillor's report – Cllr J Fleming



#### **Annual Report 2018/ 2019**

#### **Gislingham Parish Council**

Councillor Jessica Fleming, Hartismere Division, Suffolk

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**State of the County** – A new County Council administration took over last May which includes Leader Cllr Mathew Hicks , and Deputy Cllr Mary Evans who is also Cabinet Member for Highways. Chief Executive; Nicola Beach took over as Chief Executive last summer from Deborah Cadman. The Council's focus over the past year has been investing in local roads and infrastructure and working in closer association with our NHS partners to improve social care and public health services.

The County Council has recently published the State of Suffolk Report 2019, which contains a wide range of information about the County; refer to [www.HealthySuffolk.org.uk/JSNA](http://www.HealthySuffolk.org.uk/JSNA)

**A140 Upgrades** – Planning approval has been granted for two new roundabouts on the A140 and a link road to the northern roundabout from the B1077 north of Eye. Construction is expected to begin in summer 2019. The scheme includes pedestrian and cycle access arrangements, and identifies some further possible modifications in the local area which will be assessed once the scheme is in place.

**Highways** - Suffolk Highways service centres at Rougham, Halesworth and Ipswich are now well established and community wardens have been working with parishes. Suffolk Highways has purchased three Nu-phalt Thermal Patching machines aided by a central government grant which achieve more effective and durable road repairs in poor weather.

The web based reporting system is now widely used for road and drainage issues -as a reminder:

Report a defect <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk/>

To check on area roadworks - <https://roadworks.org/>

A community 'self help' scheme has been developed and is now available to parishes to carry out minor work locally. <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/community-self-help-scheme/>. Luke Merton is a Community Warden for Gislingham

**'The Hold' Historic Records Centre, Ipswich** - construction has commenced and the new centre is set to open in Spring 2020. It will replace the existing Ipswich Record Office in Gatacre Road, the Lowestoft and Bury Record Offices will remain open. On this basis Suffolk Record Office was on March 28<sup>th</sup> awarded

Archive Service Accreditation, a quality standard which allows records of national importance to be retained in the County in the long term.

**Upgrades to Suffolk Recycling Centres** – The County is investing £6m into upgrades or replacement at Foxhall, Haverhill, Ipswich and Stowmarket; a suitable new site is needed for the latter. Construction is expected to get underway in 2019/20.

**Special Education Needs and Disabilities Investment** - Suffolk County Council has committed capital investment build local specialist provisions for children and young people with SEND. This includes two or three new special schools and over 30 specialist units attached to existing mainstream schools, a number of which aim to open in 2020.

**Broadband** – The Council, in partnership with Districts, has secured £1.725m from DEFRA to help provide Superfast Broadband access to rural businesses currently excluded from fibre broadband rollout, and to enable additional non-business premises to upgrade. This will help connect some of the remaining 2% of the County not covered by existing contracts, although more work is needed to reach all premises. Connections for the qualifying rural areas will begin later in 2019.

**Planning and Major Projects** – Suffolk County Council determines applications for waste, minerals, highways and some schools and is a consultee on local as well as major infrastructure projects. In the past year the Council has reviewed EDF's Stage 3 plans for Sizewell C and Scottish Power Renewables for new land based substations and cabling to support offshore wind farms. SCC has objected to current plans for both projects due to effects on traffic and transport, protected species and landscapes, and cumulative effects on the East Suffolk coastal areas.

Nationally the Government issued an updated National Planning Policy Framework in July, updated in February 2019, and new guidance on Neighbourhood Plans. The Council is working on its own Design Guidance anticipated later this year to help influence and improve new developments.

**Council Budget Challenge** – With the reducing government revenue support grant the Council needed to raise council tax this year to help pay for needed services, particularly health and social care which now take ¾ of the total budget of £519m.

If you have comments or questions about this report or any other matter please get in touch as I would like to hear your views.

Thank you for your support and participation over the past year.

## **2 To receive Mid Suffolk District Councillor's report – Cllr R Warboys**

Cllr R Warboys introduced himself, and as only newly elected declared he was learning a lot. The Cllr wished to be approachable, to work for all people and I will be writing an article with further information to go in the Messenger. So far the Cllr had been impressed with those who work for the District Council, especially customer services taking over 1,000 enquiries a day on email and telephone.

The Cllr said to contact him if you are finding it difficult to contact the right dept in the District Council.

The Cllr will be attending Planning Training for Planning Committees and also wants to understand the structure of the District Council and who does what.

## **3 Presentation of the Watson Bowl – by Newly Elected Chair Julie Bell**

Cllr J Bell announced and presented the Watson Bowl to two people this year, Mr & Mrs Neale. The Watson Bowl is presented to the person or persons who, in the view of the Parish Council, have contributed in a significant way to the fabric of the village in any capacity. Cllr J Bell read out the Certificate:-

*The Watson Bowl for 2018 is presented to Mr Peter Neale and Mrs Helen Neale. They have both worked tirelessly for the village in various ways. Peter has been chairman of Friends of St Mary which, as an organisation has raised thousands of pounds to help maintain the fabric of the church. He has also chaired the Gislingham Allotments and Gardens Association for many years. Helen has organized the extremely successful Flower Festival held over August Bank Holiday weekends which not only raised funds for the church but also brought much pleasure to those who came to admire the magnificent displays. Importantly both Peter and Helen have organized the very popular Saturday Morning book sales every month which provide an excellent opportunity for the community to get together over a cup of coffee and a piece of cake. Individually they have done much for the village; as a team they have contributed massively to the community at large. They are very worthy recipients of the Watson Bowl 2018.*

#### **4 To receive the Parish Chair's report – by Newly elected Chair Cllr Julie Bell**

I should point out that although I am Chairing this meeting, it is not a Parish Council Meeting, it is a statutory responsibility which the Parish Council carries out.

Firstly, thank you to the following Councillors for their hard work and commitment whilst on the Parish Council. **Jo Cripps** and **Clive Chopping**, who was responsible for Footpaths and was the Vice Chairman, who stood down earlier this year and the following Councillors who did not seek re-election in May. **Stuart Wells**, responsible for siting the speed indicator device on Mill Street and collating the data. **Ron Pye**, responsible for inspecting the play area on Charity Meadow and overseeing the Accounts for the Parish Clerk.

**Kathy Brooke**, Safeguarding Officer and member of the Outdoor Sport and Recreation Working Party. **Geoff Laurence**, who sadly passed away only a few days ago, we extend our condolences to Jo and his family. **Geoff** was responsible for the street lighting and for the initiative of replacing all the Council streetlights with modern, more efficient lamps. Finally **Chris Pitt** who served as Chairman of the Parish Council for the past 10 years who made a significant contribution to the Village, unfortunately Chris could not make the meeting this evening but I am sure you will have other opportunities to catch up with him to express your thanks.

The Parish Council would like to thank the many Volunteers within the Village. **Martin Bryant** who took on the role of Footpath Warden and **Chris Terry** who looks after the “triangular flowerbed”, Litter Pickers that come out in all weathers and the many residents that contribute in any way towards making Gislingham a fantastic place to live in. Thank you.

I am pleased to announce the newly elected Councillors for **Gislingham Parish Council** consists of **myself, Christopher Tranter** (who is the Vice Chairman), **Felix Oliver, Jennifer Malone, Jo Pitt** and **Chris Saunders**. On Monday of this week two additional Councillors were co-opted at the Parish Annual Meeting and they are **Eric Sheehan** and **Ian Urwin**. Those here this evening would you please like to stand up so residents can put a “face to the name”. **Can I take this opportunity to announce that we still have one vacancy to fill on the Parish Council, if you are interested in joining us please do speak to either myself or Teresa the Parish Clerk.**

The Parish Council tries hard to engage with the community by way of the **Help Desk** run on a monthly basis alongside the Book Sale. The Parish Council website is now well established and has proved to be popular with many “hits” being recorded. We also have a Facebook page.

Both Facebook and the website are very useful ways for the public to communicate with the Council and vice versa.

In last year's report Chris mentioned that we were looking at ways of improving the facilities at **the play area** and installing a map outside the village hall. The climbing wall and the shelter were both in place before the start of the school holidays and the map was put in place in September. Many thanks to **Adrian Waite** who drew up the map.

The Parish Council has also taken on other issues affecting the village. After a long campaign and a long wait we now have a new **post box** installed outside the Village Shop and we have a mobile post office visiting twice each week.

The Parish Council was responsible for co-ordinating events marking 100 years since the end of **World War I**. The new flower bed in front of the village hall was "planted" with 100 poppies. The event was marked by the phenomenal efforts of the WI who provided refreshments on 11<sup>th</sup> November for at least twice as many people as they had expected! It was a sterling effort and was very much appreciated by all.

The most spectacular display was the decoration of the church with some 9000 hand knitted or crocheted poppies by residents of Gislingham. A big thank you to Jackie and Ken Campbell for producing such a memorable display, the floodlighting of the church was particularly spectacular!

Last year Chris mentioned that the Village would have a lot more funds at its disposal as a result of developments in the village and the Community Infrastructure Levy, known as CIL, that would accrue. To help decide how to spend that money and other 106 funds held by MSDC we undertook a Consultation. This was a major piece of work and required a questionnaire to be delivered to each household and for it to be collected. The Parish Council are in the process of seeking to have all the data collated and to be analysed over the coming months, so watch this space!!

I would encourage all residents to look at the Agendas and Minutes on the Gislingham Parish Council website to keep you up to date on items which are discussed at meetings by Councillors. At these meetings there is time set aside for the public to voice any concerns they have in the Village.

## **5 To receive the Responsible Finance Officer's (RFO) Report – T Davis**

PARISH COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL REPORT – 2018/2019

The balance in hand at the start of the financial year 2018/2019 was £20321.42. This year income totalled £53856.23 and expenditure was £34356.41, which after accounting for uncleared cheques totalling £1025.34 leaves a balance in hand of £39821.24.

There were no major grants this year but £100 was distributed to The Royal British Legion along with £150 to local charities and organisations including the Road Safety Team of Gislingham Primary School. The precept for 2018/2019 has been set at £15,120.

The bulk of budgeted expenditure for 2019/2020 will be Staff wages, Grass cutting, Loan repayment of the street lights, insurance, Street lighting maintenance, and General maintenance.

As at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019, there is a total of £48,712.87 of CIL funds, this money needs to be allocated within 5yrs of receipt. There is also approximately £80,000 of Section 106 funds held with the District council which can be applied for by the Parish Council for the sole purpose of Outdoor Sport and Recreation. We are in the process of obtaining the 106 funds from District Council to pay for the new Basket Swing and Accessible Roundabout.

Earmarked reserves have been set aside for things such as;- replacement playground equipment, elections, allotments, sports club, youth activities, outdoor sport and recreation, loss of clerk, war memorial and Ground maintenance.

**BANK RECONCILLIATION 31 MARCH 2019**

CURRENT ACCOUNT	3881.28	BROUGHT FORWARD	20321.42
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT	36965.30	INCOME	53856.23
UNCLEARED CHEQUES	-1025.34		
		LESS EXPENDITURE	34356.41
TOTAL	39821.24	TOTAL	39821.24

**6 To receive reports from those within the community involved in Gislingham  
Head Teacher’s Report to Gislingham Parish Council May 2019**

I am very pleased to provide this report to Gislingham Parish Council.

Gislingham CE Primary continues to be a popular school currently with 139 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils come from the village itself but an increasing number are attending from surrounding villages as well as from further afield. Last summer, a new classroom was erected to accommodate our growing numbers, enabling us to move to a seven class structure allowing pupils to be taught in single age groups.

We continued our association with the Schools Shakespeare Festival and, in the autumn term, our Year 6 pupils put on a spectacular performance of A Midsummer Night’s Dream at The Apex, Bury St Edmunds. Their visually delightful and highly original adaptation, together with their excellent comic timing, received a well-deserved standing ovation and outstanding reviews.

Opportunities to enhance the curriculum through enrichment activities continue to be very important to us and a wide variety of trips and extra-curricular activities have been enjoyed by all classes over the last year. The Year 6 pupils enjoyed their residential in North Norfolk and our Year 5s experienced a day of orienteering followed by an overnight camp in the school grounds. Next month our Year 3 and 4 pupils will get to experience an overnight stay in school. Trips have included visits to various museums , the seaside, the theatre, food and farming fair, Euston Farm Estate, Bewilderwood, Framlingham and Orford Castles to name just a few.

We have developed our provision for music by employing a specialist music teacher, enabling children in both Key Stage One and Two to learn to read music and play a variety of instruments, including keyboard and ukulele.

Another very exciting project is our newly formed School Radio Club. Six Year 5 children have been learning all aspects of radio broadcasting and will shortly be producing a weekly slot to be aired on the local radio station ‘Park Radio’. We are extremely grateful to Adrian Waite for his expertise and for supporting us with this unique venture.

Sport and PE is high on the agenda at Gislingham Primary thanks to the commitment and dedication of our sports leader Mrs Norman. The school achieved its Silver Sports Award last summer and is now working towards its Gold Award. We continue to offer a wide variety of before and after school sporting clubs including: dodgeball, gymnastics, dance, netball, cricket, football, circuit training and running. Pupils have opportunities to play competitive sport with other local schools and we have been very successful in various tournaments and competitions throughout the year; winning or being placed in the top three in many.

Our Junior Road Safety Officers have been working hard to educate their fellow pupils about keeping safe on the roads and have carried out various activities throughout the year to promote road safety.

During the year, the children have been very proactive in organising various fund raising events. This year alone we have raised money for various charities including Save the Children, Children in Need, Poppy Appeal and Fairtrade. Our food donation to Stowmarket Food Bank, following our Harvest Festival, was the largest the foodbank had ever received in one collection.

I am extremely grateful to the Friends of Gislingham School (FoGS) who have worked diligently and with good humour to raise considerable sums to enhance opportunities for our pupils. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of a very dedicated staff who work tirelessly to ensure the pupils receive a high quality and enjoyable education.

Finally, I wish to thank the many parents and members of our wider community who support us. We continue to have the highest possible aspirations for our pupils, and are always keen to welcome local people who would like to volunteer.

Julie Welham 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019

## **7 Residents Questions**

A question was asked on the situation in respect to bringing into use unoccupied housing and what was being done. This question was passed to Dst Cllr R Warboys thought it a good idea and would look into it.

**Meeting Closed at 8:35pm**

**REFRESHMENTS WERE SERVED ON CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING.**