

# Ashfield cum Thorpe Parish Council

## Approved Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 12 December 2018 at 7.30pm at the Community Hall, Ashfield

**Present:** Cllr Myles Hansen (Chair), Cllr Robert Grimsey (Vice-Chair), Cllr Simon Garrett (arrived 9.25pm), Cllr Ruth Hart and Cllr Paul Whayman

**Attendance:** Cllr Matthew Hicks (County Councillor) and Simon Ashton (Parish Clerk)

**1. Apologies and Approval of Absences**

Apologies were received from Cllr Geoff Hazlewood and Cllr Ann Langley and their absence was approved. Apologies were also received from Cllr Simon Garrett for his late arrival.

**2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests by Members**

There were no interests declared by any of the Members.

**3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting on 12 September 2018**

Minutes of the previous meeting of the Parish Council on 12 September 2018 were received and approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**4. Reports by the District Councillor and County Councillor**

Cllr Hicks delivered his county council report at the meeting. A copy of the report has been made available at the end of these minutes for information.

**5. Contributions by Members of the Public**

There were no issues raised by members of the public.

**6. Consideration of Planning Applications and Decision Notices**

(a) MSDC DC/18/04276: Application Received (Comments Due 22 October 2018)

Pear Tree Farm, The Street, Ashfield cum Thorpe, IP14 6NA

Members noted that no comments had been submitted on this application.

(b) MSDC DC/18/04276: Application Granted (14 November 2018)

Pear Tree Farm, The Street, Ashfield cum Thorpe, IP14 6NA

Members noted the outcome of this planning application.

**7. Finance**

(a) Members noted the receipt of £97.74, a VAT refund claim for payments made in 2017/18, on 5 September 2018.

(b) Members noted the receipt of £1,350.00, the second half of the Council's precept from Mid Suffolk District Council for 2018/19, on 10 September 2018.

(c) Review of income, expenditure and budget reports of activity to 30 November 2018 were reviewed and noted.

- (d) Approval of the bank reconciliation of activity to 30 November 2018 was proposed by Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Whayman and agreed by Members.
- (e) Members lent their support to the Parish Clerk's approach to refrain from providing Barclays Bank with any of the personal information requested unless a case was subsequently presented to reconfirm the personal information previously provided.
- (f) The Parish Clerk presented a business case to reappoint the Council's Finance and Planning representatives and appoint one or more additional cheque signatories. Approval to postpone the appointment of the Finance and Planning representatives until the Annual General Meeting and to appoint Cllr Hart and Cllr Whayman as additional cheque signatories was proposed by Cllr Hansen, seconded by Cllr Grimsey and agreed by Members. Cllr Whayman agreed to initiate the necessary bank enquiries.
- (g) Approval to appoint Suffolk Association of Local Councils as the Council's Internal Auditor for 2018/19 was proposed by Cllr Grimsey, seconded by Cllr Hansen and agreed by Members.
- (h) A draft budget was presented to Members by the Parish Clerk which was then discussed and concluded with the setting of a precept of £2,926.58 for 2019/20 to be requested from Mid Suffolk District Council. Following a review of general reserves, Members were confident that they were sufficient to finance the eventuality of a by-election and any other unplanned costs in 2019/20. Approval of the final budget and setting of the precept was proposed by Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Whayman and agreed by Members.
- (i) The official form to request the Council's approved precept of £2,926.58 from Mid Suffolk District Council for 2019/20 by 31 January 2019 was signed by Cllr Hansen, Cllr Hart, Cllr Whayman and the Parish Clerk.
- (j) Subject to the clarification of an apparent conflict in the fees to be charged in 2018/19, approval for the Chair to sign the service level agreement issued to the Council for the payroll service delivered by Suffolk Association of Local Councils was proposed by Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Grimsey and agreed by Members.
- (k) Payments were authorised in favour of the Parish Clerk's wages and office and personal expenses (£472.43) and Suffolk Association of Local Councils for the payroll service (April to September 2018) (£27.00). Approval of these payments was proposed by Cllr Whayman, seconded by Cllr Hart and agreed by Members.

## **8. Governance**

- (a) The Council's Standing Orders, based on the NALC model version updated in April 2018, and Financial Regulations presented by the Parish Clerk, were reviewed by Members. Approval and adoption of these documents was proposed by Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Grimsey and agreed by Members. The contents of NALC Legal Topic Note 87 on Procurement were also noted by Members.
- (b) Cllr Hart confirmed that the village defibrillator training session provided by four members of the Debenham First Responders team, two of which were residents of the village, had been attended by 26 local residents on 6 November 2018.
- (c) Approval to make a donation of £50 to Debenham First Responders was proposed by Cllr Grimsey, seconded by Cllr Whayman and agreed by Members. The third payment of the meeting was then subsequently authorised in this regard proposed by Cllr Whayman, seconded by Cllr Hart and agreed by Members.

- (d) Following a discussion by Members on financial liability and funding options, approval to purchase a defibrillator and cabinet up to a cost of £1,500, and pursue total funding from Cllr Hicks and Community Heartbeat Trust, was proposed by Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Whayman and agreed by Members.
- (e) Cllr Grimsey confirmed that adhesive anti-dog fouling signs had been obtained from Mid Suffolk District Council which had been affixed to the telegraph poles in the village. Further monitoring of the situation would therefore take place and an update provided.
- (f) The Parish Clerk confirmed that a response had not been received from the Mid Suffolk North Safer Neighbourhood Team following a previous request made to provide an update on the criminal activity in the area. The reported status was noted by Members.

**9. Highways**

- (a) Members agreed that speed reduction signs would be too expensive to pursue.
- (b) Cllr Whayman confirmed that the issue of the spraying and marking of footpaths had been resolved.
- (c) Cllr Grimsey confirmed that nothing more could be done with the drainage ditches which had been started by the landowner but not finished. He also confirmed that he was in general discussion with landowners regarding the maintenance of pathways.

**10. Consultations**

- (a) Members agreed that they had no comments to make in connection with the Polling Districts, Stations and Places Review consultation by 31 December 2018.

**11. Matters for Future Consideration**

- (a) Review of (i) Income & Budget (ii) Expenditure & Budget (28 February 2019)
- (b) Review & Approval of the Council's Bank Reconciliation (28 February 2019)
- (c) Review of Implementation of the Internal Audit Recommendations (2017/18)
- (d) Confirmation of the Booking of the Internal Audit (2018/19) (April 2019)
- (e) Approval of the Council's External Audit Reporting Exemption Status (2018/19)
- (f) Approval of the NJCLGS/NALC Parish Clerk Pay Scales (2019/20) (1 April 2019)
- (g) Agreement of the Dates & Routine Agendas of Parish Council Meetings (2019/20)
- (h) Agreement of the Date & Agenda of the Annual Parish Meeting (8 May 2019)
- (i) Approval of the Parish Clerk's Attendance at SALC Elections 2019 Briefing
- (j) Consideration of the Implementation of Matters Arising from Elections Briefing

**12. Date of the Next Meeting**

- (a) 13 March 2019 (Agenda Items & Documents Received by 5 March 2019)
- (b) The meeting finished at 9.40pm.

Simon Ashton, Parish Clerk

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13 March 2019

## **December 2018 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks**

### **Suffolk County Council's budget setting for 2019/2020**

On 14 November, Suffolk County Council published key papers which mark the beginning of a three-month process to agree Suffolk County Council's budget for 2019/20. The papers detail how SCC proposes to increase its overall budget by nearly £15 million (3%) to £514.8 million in 2019/20, with specific increases in the council's children and young people and adult care budgets which support Suffolk's most vulnerable people. This includes accounting for an expected significant increase in the cost of providing services and inflation. The council is also looking to maximise the financial contribution from ten long-term programmes which focus on transforming how the council delivers its services and works with other authorities and public service partners. The papers also summarise an initial list of potential savings totalling £11.2 million, which are required to help balance the overall budget. These include proposals to maximise income, as well as cost, grant, service and staffing reductions. To balance its budget for the next financial year, the council needs to save around £25m. We have some really tough calls to make if we are to balance the budget in the next financial year and in years beyond. There are no easy options left. What can be in no doubt is that this council remains absolutely committed to supporting the most vulnerable young people and older residents across Suffolk. In fact, we are actually planning to spend more in these crucial services next year as demand for these services increases year-on-year. SCC will not know the full extent of its grant from central government until 6 December at the earliest. After that, the budget proposals will be finalised and then agreed in public at the Cabinet meeting in January 2019 and the Council meeting in February 2019.

### **Suffolk wins praise at the national Community Energy Awards 2018**

On 5 November, it was announced that the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership has received a national award for supporting local communities to be more energy efficient. An expert panel of judges awarded the Local Authority Award to the Partnership for its close working with local organisations. This includes exploring how organisations can be more energy efficient, helping to source funding, producing a community energy toolkit, providing technical support and investing in energy efficiency installations. In addition, over 120 community buildings have received in-depth advice and support to be more energy efficient. The Suffolk Climate Change Partnership is a collaboration of SCC, all Suffolk's borough and district councils and The Environment Agency. It supports the county's communities, businesses and residents to reduce carbon emissions, realise the economic benefits of reducing energy consumption and adapt to the future impacts of climate change. Its work has brought in significant amounts of external funding to Suffolk, running highly-successful projects for its customers.

### **The Hold construction is underway**

Construction of The Hold building is well underway, with groundworks, piling, and foundations all part of this phase of construction. The Hold will deliver a new home for the majority of Suffolk's unique archival collections, as well as state-of-the-art public facilities including seminar rooms and a 200-seat auditorium. The new building, which will be situated near the junction of Fore Street and Grimwade Street in Ipswich, will be part of the University of Suffolk campus and will be run by the county and the university together. Work began on the construction of The Hold building in August, with the demolition of a derelict building at the northern end of the site. The construction will focus on the strong rooms first, where the archives will be kept. The building will formally open to the public in Spring 2020.

### **A useful link to share with residents and community groups**

'Can Do Health and Care' is about local health and care services working in a more joined up way. Health, care, voluntary and community organisations in Suffolk and North East Essex are working together with a shared vision and plans to improve the health and care outcomes for the one million people living locally. Their newsletter keeps local residents and community groups up to date with some of their key projects and news and can be accessed at <http://www.candohealthandcare.co.uk/news/edition-3/>.

Some highlights from their latest newsletter are the launch of a suicide prevention app in Suffolk, a new group to support people in East and Central Suffolk who are caring for loved ones with mental health conditions and a community café that has opened in Rougham as part of a village initiative designed to combat loneliness and isolation.

### **Matthew Hicks - County Councillor for the Thredling Division**

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