

Minutes of Sible Hedingham Annual Parish Assembly Meeting Held in the Village Hall, Parkfields, Sible Hedingham on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs R Volkwyn (Chairman), G Jefferson, L Heywood, L Parkin, P Gammon, S Metson, B Newman, D Finch (County Councillor) Miss J Laken (Community Agent), Mrs G McCoyd (Clerk) and 39 members of public.

### **1. Chairman's Welcome**

Cllr R Volkwyn welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that a minutes silence in remembrance of the suffering in Manchester would be held.

Everybody stood In silent contemplation for the minute.

### **2 Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs D Holmes (business), P Sarel (illness), J Stopher (business) H Johnson (BDC Meeting) J Beavis (another Parish Meeting)

### **3 To confirm the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Assembly held Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2016**

The minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2016 were confirmed by those present and duly signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **4 Matters arising from those minutes**

There were no matters arising.

### **5 Miss Alannah Pettigrew was then invited to give a report.**

Miss Alannah Pettigrew (aged 12) read out a report explaining that she was the Miss Junior United Kingdom Empress for the South East and would be attending the finals to compete for the UK title. She would like to use her position to promote the local community, community spirit and raise awareness of great causes. Her full report is on file at the Parish Council Office.

### **6 Essex County Council Report**

Cllr D Finch spoke on five main subjects:

#### **1. Funding**

The funding for Local Government is being changed. The Government is redefining the basis of funding. The grant system is being removed and replaced by a larger share of business rate. 100% of business rate would now be retained in Essex for Essex County Council and District Councils. It was unsure how the money would be divided.

## 2. Care of the Elderly

Cllr David Finch has been lobbying the Government for the last two years because in Essex 21% of the population are over 65 compared to the national average of 16% and the number aged over 85 is set to double in Essex. The system which is in place at the moment needs reforming and a long term solution found. The small amount of money currently charged within the precept was a short term solution. He will continue to lobby the Government.

## 3. Economy

Essex is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest contributor in the country to the Gross Domestic Product and they need to make it grow to encourage new business. Essex has the lowest unemployment in the country. Productivity is high in Essex especially compared to the North.

There are 3 new Secondary Schools planned for Colchester and 2 for Chelmsford. 94% of the schools are good or outstanding. Essex is focussed on schools not performing as a result 58 improvement notices have been served.

Essex is launching a lottery, the ticket will be localised so that local charities and voluntary groups will gain and not Essex County Council.

Property owned by Essex is being rationalised with much being converted to flats or apartments.

Essex County Council is investing in digital aids for the elderly.

## 4. Highways

Two Hundred million pounds will be invested in next years Highway maintenance.

Cllr D Finch then answered the following questions:

When is the launch of the Essex Lottery?

It will be launched in October this year, there will be a weekly ticket costing £1 and prizes will be awarded monthly and annually. It is uncertain how much the monthly prize will be but the annual one will £25,000. All money contributed will go towards a charity or voluntary group.

What has happened regarding devolution?

Essex County Council are not focussing on devolution as no-one deal throughout the country has been the same and of the 15 districts in Essex, 8 had voted against having a Mayor. The Government was focussed on Brexit and not devolution at the moment.

Essex County Council was focussed on growing the economy, investing in the social structure, children getting the best education, social care and low taxation.

What is meant by digital aids for the elderly?

It is known that if an elderly person falls over 4 times they will have broken bones, so technology is helping by predicting the falls so that intervention can happen before the fall. Technology is being used to help people stay at home longer.

The Fire Service is concentrating on prevention, new properties are being inspected and technology is making properties safer.

Cats Eyes in the road will be able to detect when a freezing road surface is likely.

Essex County Council is investing in digital technology to help the elderly be safer.

Regarding Social Care, as a Carer I feel let down, what help is there?

Essex County Council is putting more help for carers on the agenda. If you need more help please feel free to contact David on 07834252070.

## **7 Braintree District Council Reports**

At this point there was no Braintree District Report as both Cllrs were absent.

## **8 Parish Council Report.**

Cllr R Volkwyn reported it has been a fairly busy year with lots to do by all Councillors.

- It was the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Twinning Association with about 80 people, both English and French, attending a great evening in the Village Hall to mark the event. On behalf of the village of Choisy-au-bac a commemorative silver tray was presented to us and in return we presented a specially commissioned brick made at Bulmer which reflects our historical ties with the brick making industry.
- At the end of last year a minibus trip was organised to Bury St Edmunds Christmas Market and as a result of its popularity another trip will be arranged for the first day of the market this year.
- We purchased and had fitted extra CCTV cameras which mean that there is now coverage of virtually all of the Recreation Ground.

- We also had a village litter pick and even though it was a wet day we collected 18 sacks of rubbish in just over 2 hours. We intend to do this 3 times a year and would welcome volunteers to help. The dates will be advertised.
- In August we organised a Teddy Bears Picnic on the Recreation Ground and a good time was had by all who attended. Prizes, donated by Wicksteeds and Darkins, were given to all children and the Twinning Association provided drinks and a raffle. Thanks to all concerned.
- We now have a Facebook page with information on forthcoming events.
- The first Village Gateway signs have been fitted with the other 4 sets to be installed soon.
- The highlight of the year was our Christmas Tree in the Co-op car park. The tree was donated by the George Family, the lights were supplied by Chris Jenkins and electricity was from Darkins Stores. About 200 attended the "switch on" and a choir from St Peter's Primary School entertained us with carol singing. This was community spirit at its best! The good news is that Paul and Fiona Earey of D.R.Earey and Sons butchers in Swan Street have offered to supply the tree for this year.

In the coming year we are looking forward to:

1. The Speed Indicator Device Signs (SIDS) finally being installed in the village.
2. The 4 remaining Gateway signs being fitted paid for by money that has been ring-fenced since 2012.
3. In the next 2-3 months finally taking over The Poppy Park which includes the old Nat West Bank Building.
4. The completion of the Bloor site when we can take over the Riverside Walk and the new play area within Earls Garden.
5. Replacing old, worn out play equipment on the Recreation Ground.
6. Redecorating the toilets on the Recreation Ground using funds from a grant from District Councillors Johnson and Beavis.
7. Acquiring land to be used for allotments.
8. Continuing to support the local GPs in acquiring a new Medical Centre.
9. Organising a coach trip to Brighton on 22<sup>nd</sup> July to raise money for Cancer Research. Cost of the trip will be £20 per person.

## **9 Displays and Written Reports.**

The meeting adjourned for refreshments and an opportunity to view display stands. Written reports and displays were provided by the following organisations: Hedingham School, Friends of St Peter's Church, Friends of Alderford Mill, Friends of Molly's Wood, Sible Hedingham Library, Hedingham Twinning Association, Hedingham Women's Institute, Hedingham Guides, Hedingham Fire Station, Braintree Neighbourhood Watch, Darkins, Earey Butchers, Finishing Touch, and J & E Pet Sitting Service. Following the break the meeting resumed.

## **10 Braintree District Council Report**

Cllr H Johnson joined the meeting at this stage and gave the following report:

The Local Plan is being discussed on the 5<sup>th</sup> June and any land for development will be in the Plan. This will then go out for consultation from June 16<sup>th</sup> to July 28<sup>th</sup>; there will be local events for people to attend.

There have been a few localised robberies, he asked everyone to be vigilant.

The General Election is forthcoming.

A minutes silence was held at the Planning Meeting tonight, the tragedy was particularly hard as it involved children.

The new Health Centre has been put back slightly as the NHS has no funding.

The walking group on a Tuesday continues.

## **11 Community Agent Report**

Miss J Laken said the Community Agents had an abundance of information at their finger tips; they had 3550 clients in Essex most were over 70. It is a County wide network, they supported informal carers and helped older people to remain independent for as long as possible. She runs local activities like a seated exercise class, a pop up lunch club and the Thursday Club. If anyone needed to contact her the Parish Office have her details.

## **12 Public Question Time.**

There were no questions.

## **13 Chairman's Address**

The Chairman thanked everyone who had provided displays and attended the meeting. He stated that there is a vacancy on the Council for a Councillor, any one who is interested to see the Clerk.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm