

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE TITHE BARN,
LOWER STREET, SPROUGHTON ON WEDNESDAY 21ST APRIL 2010**

Mr S.Curl - Chairman of Sproughton Parish Council

Mrs S.Frankis - Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

29 members of the public attended the meeting

Apologies for absence were received from:

Mrs H.Earey, District Cllr. Peter Jones

1 WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr Simon Curl opened the meeting at 7.30pm, introducing himself, Mrs Sue Frankis, the Parish Clerk and welcoming all of those present.

2 TO READ, CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING HELD ON 19TH MAY 2009

The minutes of the Parish meeting held on 19th May 2009 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting and were duly signed.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Re. minute no. 09/3 (iii)

Cllr Curl advised that the affordable housing needs survey identified a need for 6 to 8 units. The Parish Council has been working with Hastoe Housing Association and Babergh District Council and has attempted to establish dialogue with the landowner of the ear-marked site at Church Lane, Sproughton, in order to bring forward the affordable housing element. The landowner has registered an application with the planning authority to develop the Church Lane site, which has yet to be determined.

(ii) Re. minute no. 09/5

Cllr Curl advised that the proposed works at the Copdock Interchange have been delayed due to a redesign issue. Sproughton Parish Council is concerned that the proposed redesign of the aligned traffic at the roundabout could have an adverse effect on the village due to diverting traffic. The Parish Council is attempting to establish dialogue with the Highways Authority.

(iii) Re. minute no. 09/10

Mrs R.Lavington advised that the refurbishment of the Tithe Barn courtyard, the insulation of the Tithe Barn and the creation of a community shop have been completed. A heating feasibility study had been commissioned by heating surveyors; it was established that the existing Tithe Barn heating system was the most appropriate.

4 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

The Annual Report of the Parish Council was presented.

Cllr Curl thanked the Clerk for her work.

Mr M.Earey advised that Babergh District Council had not taken action to repair the churchyard footways but that the repairs had been actioned as the result of a survey. The repairs were paid for by Sproughton Parochial Church Council, who is awaiting reimbursement by Babergh District Council.

Mr M.Earey expressed concerns that whilst the Parish Council has undertaken to refurbish and redevelop the Tithe Barn, it has been at the expense of leaving Sproughton Parochial Church Council without sufficient storage space. He asked why, when the Parish Council had received grant money for the works to be undertaken, a proportion of it could not have been used to pay for a storage facility for Sproughton Parochial Church Council. Cllr Curl reminded Mr Earey that they have had discussions regarding the matter and explained that when grants are awarded to the Parish Council, the money can only be spent on the specifics of the application; money can not be spent on projects not detailed within the application. Mr Earey felt that the provision of storage for Sproughton Parochial Church Council items should have been included as part of any grant application for the redevelopment of the Tithe Barn.

Mr P.Hughes-Reckitt reiterated Mr Earey's concerns and felt that some decisions to redevelop the Tithe Barn had been 'bull-dozed' through without full realization of the results of those decisions.

Mr R.Searle responded that health and safety issues had been raised by the County Council fire safety officer regarding the unsafe storage of Sproughton parochial Church Council's bonfire equipment at the Tithe Barn; this was prior to the commencement of any redevelopment work. He considered that the tidying up of the Tithe Barn has created better use of the site.

Mrs J.Everett advised that Sproughton Parochial Church Council now has insufficient storage facilities.

5 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS, THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND THE COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICER

The report of District Cllrs Peter Jones and Nicholas Ridley was presented.

District Cllr Nicholas Ridley praised the Parish Council for the work that it undertakes, especially the redevelopment of the Tithe Barn and the creation of a community shop. He advised that the debate on Local Government Review has held up progress in Suffolk and although it does not appear to be progressing, Babergh Members had believed that a Unitary solution would have delivered the chance of great savings.

Cllr Curl asked how the Babergh District Council finances were fairing. Cllr Ridley advised that Babergh had never had large reserves and that each year it has to work towards a balanced budget, achieving £1.3 million in savings during 2009.

Mr M.Earey commented that if Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council were to merge, it would be hoped that any savings created by the merger would not be spent on new office buildings. Cllr Ridley advised that it would be very unlikely, as both councils have excellent facilities at present.

The report of County Cllr Kathy Pollard was presented.

County Cllr, Kathy Pollard complimented the parish for being a very active and lively community. She advised that if a residual waste treatment facility were to be sited at the former sugar beet factory, Sproughton, it would be for the processing of commercial and industrial waste. She referred to the proposed National Grid, Bramford to Twinstead pylon routes, none of which were acceptable to residents. Her views remain that National Grid has failed to vigorously investigate other options for undergrounding or an undersea grid.

The report of Pc Gary Austin was presented.

Pc Austin expressed his thanks to the organisers of the 'Firework' display for a well managed and co-ordinated event. He advised that during the period 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010, there had been 39 reported crimes in Sproughton compared to 52 reported crimes for the previous twelve month period. The crimes were reported as 8 theft, 5 burglaries, 9 criminal damage, 3 assaults, 3 driving offences, 1 drugs offence and 6 others. Of the 39 reported crimes, 18 had been at the Farthing Road Industrial Estate (a reduction from 29 for the previous twelve month period).

The report of Sproughton CEVC Primary School was presented by Mr M.Cort, Chair of Governors. He advised that the Governors have evaluated the progress of the school against the OFSTED Key Indicators of Effectiveness and their Summative Judgment is that the forthcoming OFSTED inspection should award the school 'good' status.

Mr R.Searle asked if the 28% of pupils being categorised as being in 'special needs' is average amongst all schools. Mr Cort advised that the figure is higher than the average.

Mr M.Everett asked what will be the situation with regards to the current news that children will not be taking forthcoming SATS tests. Mr Cort advised that the Governing Body will support the headteacher.

6 TO RECEIVE THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2010

The Annual Accounts of the Parish Council, for the year ended 31st March 2010, were presented. The accounts had been approved at the Parish Council meeting on 14th April 2010.

Mr P.Hughes-Reckitt asked why the Parish Council had not made a payment for the maintenance of the church clock. He was advised that no charge had been forthcoming as the work had been carried out free of charge.

Mrs J.Mardon thanked the Parish Council for the new badminton posts provided for the use of the ladies badminton group.

7 TO RECEIVE THE CHARITY ACCOUNTS AND REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Charity Accounts and report of the Trustees were presented.

8 PRESENTATION BY THE RIVER GIPPING TRUST

Mr S.Greystrom, treasurer of the River Gipping Trust made a detailed presentation of the work and aspirations of the Trust.

9. PARISH PLAN

Mr M.Everett presented an executive summary of the Parish Plan and advised that the plan has been completed. He advised that it is considered not to be viable to issue a printed copy of the plan to every parish household but it is hoped that the plan can be made available electronically on request.

10 PRESENTATION OF THE 'LOCAL HERO' AWARDS

Cllr S.Curl presented awards to Mr J.Foster and Mr R.Milbourne for their volunteer work associated with the Sproughton Allotment Gardens and to Mr R.Searle for his works associated with the Tithe Barn improvement works.

11 MATTERS RAISED BY PARISHIONERS

Mr M.Earey expressed concerns that contact between the Parish Council and the church authority needs to be established. He advised that the Church Hall will celebrate 100years of existence in 2011 and of the intention to apply for grants to upgrade the building. He asked that the Parish Council look favourably on any proposed planning application that they are asked to consider relating to the Church Hall.

Miss D.Bradbury requested volunteers to come forward as new trustees of the Millennium Green Trust.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm