

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

## APRIL 2017

### **COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The Council met six times since the last APM for ordinary council meetings and once for an EGM on 2<sup>nd</sup> September. This meeting was devoted to consideration of the Amenity Site following announcement of the closure of Alexander's College. Agendas and minutes of all these meetings are on the website.

### **EXTERNAL MEETINGS**

During the course of the year Parish Councillors have attended meetings on behalf of the Council at SALC, Alde and Ore Estuary Partnership, WSNT, Coastal Communities Trust, Greenprint Forum and BCP. Feedback from these meetings ensures that the Council is well informed on current issues which affect Council activities.

In addition Christine Block, District Ward Councillor, and Andrew Reid, Suffolk County Councillor, both attend PC meetings to report on their respective Council activities. We are most grateful for their attendance and advice and the opportunities to discuss their reports with them.

### **PLANNING MATTERS**

There have been 14 planning applications this year which the Council has considered and commented on; five are currently awaiting decisions by SCDC, one has been refused, the remainder have received consent. Six of these applications were in Shingle Street. Details of all these can be seen on the website.

Three applications from 2015/6 were taken to appeal against refusal by SCDC. Two concerned additions of large balconies to properties in Manor Farm Estate, BPC objected and appeals were dismissed. The third was for development of Cranes garage site; BPC objected and the appeal was dismissed.

School Meadow Site: This outline application submitted in October 2015 is formally still awaiting decision: it was recommended for conditional approval, subject to a 106 agreement, against strong community objection. On recent enquiry (13.4.17) the Council was informed that discussions concerning legal agreement on affordable housing on the site are still on-going.

A recent advertisement in the EADT housing supplement suggested that a revision to the submitted application may be submitted but has not been published by SCDC.

Housing Needs Survey: Combined data from surveys conducted in Bawdsey and Alderton has been put together and the main conclusions are displayed this evening in the VH together with useful comments from residents from both villages. This data will be put on

the website. The survey results give a snapshot of housing need in our communities which will inform council decisions on planning. Key data is 71% of respondents thought affordable housing was needed with 26% objecting. 10% had family members move away because they could not find a suitable home locally. Some of the data also revealed that downsizing and retirement housing were also live considerations.

## **EMERGENCY PLANNING**

The emergency plan developed by the Emergency Planning Group for Alderton and Bawdsey was tested for real on 13<sup>th</sup> January when a surge tide was predicted. The Group was asked by the Joint Emergency Planning Unit (SCC) to open the village hall as a rest centre for possible use should properties need to be evacuated. Fortunately the wind intensity dropped near the midnight high tide and the surge and high tide did not coincide. No damage was reported. The road to Shingle Street was temporarily flooded and Bawdsey Quay was covered by one third at high tide.

A report from the Emergency Planning Group is available on the website with the minutes for PC meeting of 15.3.17.

## **COASTAL PROTECTION**

On February 11<sup>th</sup> Bawdsey Coastal Partnership (BCP) held its AGM in the Village Hall. Tim Green resigned as Chairman and Nick Crick was elected as the new Chairman. He gave a resume of Company Activities during the last six months. This was followed by an address by Dr. Therese Coffey, MP for Suffolk Coastal Constituency. Information about BCP is shown on the website.

BCP has asked the Parish Council for a donation towards the cost of an engineering study to propose a solution for the on-going erosion at East Lane. Nick Crick was asked to make a presentation to the PC on background information for this study which was made at the March PC meeting. (See minutes on the website) The Council agreed to donate £500.00 during the 2017/18 financial year.

## **DEBEN ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP**

Concern had been expressed by Cllr. Christine Block on behalf of DEP and SCDC about the erosion of flood cell 1 on the estuary particularly near the river mouth. The situation is summarised at minute 7(iii) of the Council meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> March. See website.

## **VILLAGE HALL AND RECREATION GROUND COMMITTEE**

The AGM of this committee is scheduled to take place two days before the APM. Minutes will be available in due course. A verbal report will be given at the APM by the Committee chairman.

## **BAWDSEY WEBSITE ([bawdsey.onesuffolk.net](http://bawdsey.onesuffolk.net))**

The website has been further developed this year and gives very full information about the village and community activities. The Parish Council records and council minutes are published in full. Thanks are due to Rod Webb, Rob Johnson, Cllr. Richard Tricker and Jenny Webb for keeping it up to date.

Residents may submit items of village interest by contacting Jenny Webb, Parish Clerk, on [bawdsey-pc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bawdsey-pc@hotmail.co.uk). A Welcome Pack for new and existing residents was put on the website in September 2016 by the parish clerk. Hard copies are available for any new resident. Our thanks are due to her for this work.

## **PARISH ACCOUNTS**

The Finance Committee has met three times this year. A summary of Parish Accounts will be published at the APM. The Council operates three accounts; one account for general parish business and one specifically to manage finance relating to the Amenity Site. A third is a Savers account to manage our Reserves. We are required by statute to combine these three accounts for our internal and external audits. A breakdown of the BQVC account can be seen on the display board.

The combined account is difficult to interpret and therefore separate accounts are also available. Copies of the combined accounts will be available at the APM.

The Council financial year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31st March. The formal year's accounts examined by our 'internal' auditor will be presented to Council at the May Council AGM.

Donations of £100.00 were made to each of Ipswich and District CAB, East Anglia Air Ambulance, Disability Advice Service and Felixstowe Volunteer Coast Patrol Service and Age UK (Suffolk). £50.00 was also donated to SCAR. (Suffolk Coast Against Retreat)  
Budgets and actual spending for 2016/17 and forthcoming budget for 2017/18 are published on the website. Copies will be made available at the APM

The Precept for 2017/18 has been increased by 5.5% to £7,280.00. Spending on walkie-talkies for an Emergency are deemed to be necessary. Additions to council reserves are also thought to be prudent in these uncertain economic times.

## **BQVC**

The Working group for the BQVC, chaired by Peter Wain, has given valuable support to the Council over the past year. A summary of this work is attached to this report.

It is disappointing to report that for a number of reasons the original proposal for development of the site has been stalled. The main events of the year are also summarised in the minutes of the January 2017 Council meeting and in the February issue of the Bawdsey Bulletin.

The WG report includes current proposals for making improvements to the site. These are regarded as an interim proposal which keeps alive our negotiations with SCDC until such time as SCDC's and Bawdsey Manor's plans for the future are developed.

### **WIND FARMS EA 1 AND 3**

The Wind Farm sub-committee has closely monitored progress on both wind farm development and has been in negotiation with Scottish Power several times which have been reported in Council minutes and Bawdsey Bulletin.

The main concern of the Parish is with the anticipated construction traffic serving the undergrounding of cables within the Deben Peninsula. Work on this will be starting shortly.

A recent meeting for the Deben Peninsula Parish Councils was held on 28<sup>th</sup> March at Sutton Village Hall which was very helpful in providing details of traffic movements. A summary has been prepared by the sub-committee and is published on the website. A further meeting is to be held with SP on the day before the APM and will be reported on verbally at the APM.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thanks have been expressed above to Christine Block and to Andrew Reid for their advice and for keeping the Council informed on District and County Council activities.

Thanks have also been expressed to Rod Webb, Rob Johnson, Richard Tricker and Jenny Webb for their work in updating and expanding coverage of the village website.

Thanks are due to Sandra Carter for assistance with the Windfarm sub-committee.

Non Council members of the BQVC Working Group, Graham Turner, Graham Smith and Jacqueline Mercer and Di Clouting and particularly Peter Wain, Chairman of the Working Group are due sincere thanks for their continued work

Great thanks are due to all Parish Councillors for their attendance and attention to the many issues with which the Council has dealt.

Above all, my thanks to Jenny Webb for keeping me sane.

*Brian Johnson*