

## GAZELEY PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Karen Peck, email: [parishclerk@gazeleypc.org.uk](mailto:parishclerk@gazeleypc.org.uk)  
Chairman: Paul Kinnon

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NOTICE OF MEETING: Annual Parish Meeting  
TIME: 6.30 pm  
DATE: Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
VENUE: Gazeley Village Hall

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## MINUTES

### Annual Parish Meeting

**01 TO RECORD APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Councillor Laurence Chapman – work commitments  
County Councillor Colin Noble – work commitments

**02 TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF:**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Parish Meeting minutes from 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Motion carried.

**03 REPORT FROM: SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITY LIAISON ENGINEER**

This report is recorded in the minutes of the Annual Meeting as Andy Moore arrived after the APM concluded.

**04 TO RECEIVE CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT**

It's been a busy year following the Gazeley Parish Council 2023 elections. The council's been working very hard to engage all the members of the community on as many aspects as the parish council can have an impact on this includes, cricket hut & field, village street lighting, roads, and highways, planning permission and village community activities. Additionally, the parish council has made extra effort to try and make parish council meetings inviting, inclusive and open to everyone to ensure that everyone feels they have their voice and concerns listened to, obviously the parish council has limited ability to correct everything.

In February 2024 the Parish Council welcomed a new Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer who is responsible for ensuring the effective management of all council resources. Please remember our Clerk is part-time and here to aid the Parish Council make positive steps within our community.

The Parish Council have engaged with West Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council to obtain funding to upgrade Street Lighting in the village. This is an ongoing process which hopefully will rectify and provide significantly improved lighting for everyone in the village.

Some progress has been made on the forge and its repair and rebuild; however, the progress has been slow, and the parish council continues to work and monitor the owner to ensure that this work can be completed timely, and, in a compliant, and effective manner, we can all hopefully agree that at least the area is a little more organised and tidier.

Overall, the parish council is pleased it is now making positive steps for Gazeley and will continue to work towards making the Parish a wonderful place to live.

The Council and I look forward to working with Gazeley village in the coming year.

## **05 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT**

### **County Councillor Colin Noble**

Thank you for reading this Parish report on things that have been happening and are coming up in the next month for your interest. Hopefully the fine weather this week continues into the Summer. As always, don't hesitate to contact me if there is anything I can help you with.

### **Help with the cost-of-living crisis**

The Council has produced a leaflet detailing the support that can be offered across the county and here in Row Heath.

SCC Cost of Living Leaflets with lots of information on are available for distribution.

If your Parish Council would like a supply of these to be able to give to residents please email the quantity you would like, together with your organisation name and delivery address to [costofliving@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:costofliving@suffolk.gov.uk) and the county council will arrange to send these to you. Please allow up to 2 weeks for delivery, although they aim to issue them sooner than this.

A printable version for easy download was requested, this can be found here: [Cost of living leaflet](#) (PDF 628 KB)

All Libraries hold copies of the leaflets. The Rural Coffee Caravan have additional leaflets and can share these with warm spaces together with their information packs.

### **STILL OPEN - Public consultation on Suffolk County Council's proposed devolution deal starts on 18<sup>th</sup> March**

A 10-week public consultation on our proposed devolution deal with the Government will start on 18<sup>th</sup> March and run through until 26<sup>th</sup> May. The consultation will be in two main parts – an open survey, hosted by Suffolk County Council, that any residents can complete and a sample survey of 1000 Suffolk residents conducted independently by Ipsos Mori. The consultation will be available through our website [www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution) and social media. There will also be media coverage highlighting the consultation.

### **Suffolk County Council welcomes Swedish Social Care Delegation**

There will be a distinctly continental feel to Social Care teams in Suffolk as the county plays host to a delegation of Social Care professionals from Sweden.

The visit by the Association of Directors of Swedish Social Services, which will be hosted jointly by both Adult Social Care and Children and Young People's services at Suffolk County Council, will be spread over three days from Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April, and will look to facilitate mutual knowledge-sharing and learning between all those taking part. There will be a real focus on understanding the different approaches, processes and policies employed in both countries which effectively deal with the universal challenge of delivering good social care.

The visit will include overviews of team and service structures, discussions around how people access services in the UK compared to Sweden including a trip out to meet the Rural Coffee Caravan, how services communicate the challenges of social care to the public, and discussions about the importance of Safeguarding and how people are kept safe. There will also be some time for the visitors to experience the beauty and unique cultural heritage of Suffolk.

**Cllr. Beccy Hopfensperger, Cabinet Member for Adult Care, said:**

"I am really looking forward to meeting the Swedish delegation, as too are officers from across Adult Social Care and Children's services. I hope that they get as much from their visit to Suffolk as our officers did when they visited Sweden last year as part of the European Social Network conference, where they shared our knowledge and expertise about our award-winning digital care service, Cassius, and showcased how we engage with the public about adult social care via the "I Care" campaign."

**Cllr. Bobby Bennett, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, said:**

"No one person, council or indeed country has all the answers when it comes to social care. Finding new ways to improve services and mitigating the challenges we all face is incredibly important, and this visit represents a great learning opportunity for both sides. I hope they enjoy their visit to Suffolk."

**Over 400 Suffolk roads set for upgrade as largest ever surfacing project gets underway**

Residents across Suffolk are set to benefit from 421 newly surfaced roads this year - almost doubling the number of roads completed last year, as Suffolk Highways' largest ever resurfacing programmes get underway.

With the start of the surface dressing programme beginning this week, 102 roads will be surface dressed, whilst a further 319 sites will benefit from a full machine resurfacing during the year.

Surface dressing is an efficient, sustainable and cost-effective maintenance treatment that prolongs the life of a road surface – it restores skid resistance and seals the road surface from water, whilst removing potholes and improving level differences of the road. The surface dressing project sits alongside the programmes for reactively repairing potholes and machine resurfacing roads, all complementing one another. During the past six months, Suffolk Highways has repaired over 9,000 potholes and resurfaced 41 roads, with a further 278 roads planned for resurfacing in this financial year.

New for this year, Suffolk Highways' supply chain partner, Hazell & Jefferies, has invested in new vehicles which allow the new surface to be laid in a safer and more efficient way. For example, the new vehicles eliminate the risk of hitting overhead cables or structures.

**Councillor Paul West, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Ipswich, Operational Highways and Flooding, said:**

"We are investing an extra £10 million into our surfacing programmes this year and have been busy trialling new ways of repairing potholes quicker, whilst streamlining processes to ensure we can keep on top of a challenging period when it comes to the surge of potholes we see during winter.

"The surface dressing programme is one of a range of methods we use to maintain and future-proof our roads. Preventative treatments such as machine resurfacing and surface dressing help stop potholes from forming in the first place.

"I am glad that extra money going to road maintenance this year is almost double what we have seen in recent years, it remains one of our top priorities as the local highway authority.

"We recognise there is some way to go, however we are committed to doing all we can within the parameters of funding and resources to maintain Suffolk's roads to the standards we all want to see."

- For more information on surface dressing and to view this year's programme, please visit: [Surface dressing](#)

- For more information on machine resurfacing and to view this year's programme, please visit: [Road Resurfacing](#)

### **99% of pupils receive a preferred primary school on National Offer Day**

99.36% of children were offered a place on National Offer Day at one of their three preferred primary schools and 96.52% were offered a place at their first preference school.

Suffolk County Council received 6,844 applications from parents and carers indicating which primary school they would prefer their child to join in September 2024.

Families who applied online can log in to the online service from today to see the school their child has been offered. They will also receive an email to confirm this offer unless they have indicated that they do not wish to. Letters were also sent to parents who made a paper application by second class post.

Once school places have been confirmed, parents need to consider how their child will get to and from school. If their child is eligible for Suffolk County Council funded school travel they will receive an email by 10 May 2024 with details of how to opt-in.

Any parents or carers with a child born between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020 who have not yet applied for a school place should make an application immediately. Information on how to make an application can be found on the [School Admission pages](#) or by contacting Suffolk County Council on **0345 600 0981**. For further information on how to view your offer online and guidance on what to do if you have not received your preferred offer, please read the [School admissions FAQ page](#).

### **New Independent Chair appointed to drive forward SEND reform**

Suffolk County Council can announce that Kathryn Boulton has been appointed as the new independent chair of the Local Area Partnership's SEND Improvement Board.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision is delivered by the Local Area Partnership in Suffolk, which includes Suffolk County Council, NHS Suffolk and North-East Essex Integrated Care Board and NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board.

The SEND Improvement Board was set up in response to the inspection of SEND services in Suffolk in November last year by Ofsted and CQC and is a requirement of the Improvement Notice that will be issued to Suffolk by the Department for Education. Made up of senior leaders from the council and NHS, board members will oversee the implementation and review of plans and services aimed at improving the way SEND services are delivered in Suffolk. It will also ensure the successful delivery of the Priority Action Plan, which was co-produced following the inspection and has been agreed by the Department for Education. [You can read this plan online](#).

The new chair of the board, Kathryn, has 37 years of experience across children's services. With an education background and success in several senior leadership roles, Kathryn has significant experience of transforming SEND services in local authorities and ensuring the voices and experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families are central to the design and delivery of SEND services.

### **Kathryn, who will chair her first meeting on June 7<sup>th</sup>, said:**

"I feel privileged to be appointed as independent chair and am committed to working with the Local Area Partnership to ensure the improvements needed are delivered at pace.

"For me, it's important that we listen and learn from children and their families and that they are at the heart of all our thinking, planning and ambitions for the future.

"I don't underestimate the challenge ahead. However, I am confident that by working together effectively, we can bring about positive change that achieves positive outcomes for children and young people with SEND across Suffolk. I am very much looking forward to getting started."

An independent chair is crucial in ensuring we stay on track and improve outcomes for our children and young people with SEND and their families. Kathryn will hold the partnership to account and will act as both a critical friend and a sounding board. The Improvement Board has an important job to do and we remain focused on providing the best provision for children and young people with SEND.

In addition to Kathryn's appointment, the Local Area Partnership will receive an Improvement Notice from the Department for Education. This was an expected outcome after the Ofsted and CQC inspection. It means that advisors from the Department for Education and NHS England will work with the Local Area Partnership to support and monitor improvement plans until further notice.

### **More Suffolk homes eligible for energy improvements**

More Suffolk households can access free home improvements to make them warmer, healthier and cheaper to run, thanks to Warm Homes Suffolk.

Residents and landlords of eligible properties can apply for energy efficient measures such as insulation, solar panels or heat pumps. Average funding of £18,000 is available for homeowners, and £12,000 for landlords and their tenants.

Warm Homes Suffolk is administered by Suffolk County Council, and delivered by East Suffolk Council, on behalf of all councils in Suffolk. It has been funding home energy efficiency improvements for two years, with funding from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

To be eligible, both of these conditions must be met:

- Homes must have an EPC rating of D, or below
- Homes are not heated by mains gas

And then either of the following conditions:

- Households have a combined pre-tax income of under £36,000 (this was previously £31,000)
- Homes are in a certain postcode (a [pre-qualified postcode checker](#) has been launched), which includes parts of:
  - Beccles, Bungay, Bury St. Edmunds, Felixstowe, Great Cornard, Haverhill, Ipswich, Kessingland, Lowestoft, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Rushmere St Andrew, Saxmundham, Sudbury

Once these conditions have been approved, an assessment of your home will identify which measures are best suited to your property. These will then be installed by trusted contractors, for free.

**Sam from Brantham** was supported by Warm Homes Suffolk in January 2024, with loft insulation and solar panels fitted to her home:

"My Energy Performance Certificate jumped from an E to a C which is amazing. I have also recently got an electric car, so being able to use my solar energy to charge my car makes the journeys into town free and my bills are now lower! The installers were super tidy and clean, and made the experience very comfortable.

I heard about Warm Homes Suffolk through Facebook and would 100% recommend applying."

Landlords and tenants are also eligible to apply, with qualifying rental properties getting up to two-thirds of costs, as an average grant of up to £12,000. Landlords must have fewer than five rental properties and their tenants must meet the eligibility criteria. Through the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan, the county's authorities have a collective ambition to be net zero by 2030, towards which Warm Homes Suffolk is contributing.

If you think you are eligible, or to find out more about how Warm Homes Suffolk could help you, visit [www.warmhomessuffolk.org](http://www.warmhomessuffolk.org) or call the team on 03456 037 686.

### **Rough Sleeping**

West Suffolk Council are taking active steps to reduce the numbers of people rough sleeping in the West Suffolk Area. This is a very difficult and challenging situation.

If you see or suspect someone is rough sleeping, please report this to [www.streetlink.org.uk](http://www.streetlink.org.uk) or directly to the Team on 01282 7578178

### **Highways Locality Budget**

I have a budget for minor highways works ranging from better signage to dropped kerbs. If there is a small highways improvement you would like to see, please let me know.

### **Locality Budget**

I have a small budget for community projects which can often help kick start an initiative with some seed funding or help to buy a new piece of equipment that a community group needs. Let me know if there are any groups or projects that could benefit from a grant.

### **District Councillor Roger Dicker**

The May 2023 District elections brought about a seismic change in the running of West Suffolk District Council.

The new administration called the West Suffolk Working Partnership contains 19 Independent Councillors. 17 Labour, 1 Green and 1 Lib Dem.

The new Chairman of the Council is myself Roger Dicker.  
The new Leader of the Council is Cliff Waterman.

The new administration immediately worked on issues that were previously not considered important.

The 1st success was introducing the Decarbonisation fund which would upgrade all Parish owned streetlights to LED thus saving the Parishes thousands of pounds in new equipment and running costs. This was particularly advantageous for the villages in the old Forest Heath Area.

The Council has also introduced its new strategic priorities:  
Supporting thriving communities  
Sustainable growth  
Delivery of affordable, available, and decent homes  
Environmental resilience.

Further improvements introduced include the £200,000 investment into a better grass cutting regime after previous years appalling service.

It has also been decided not to carry on with £60 million plus Bury St. Edmunds leisure centre whilst interest rates are currently so high.

The District portion (10%) of your Council tax bill has been set at a government advised 2.99% thus enabling a balanced budget for the next 2 years.

West Suffolk is coming towards the end of the new Local Plan process. All 3 stages have been consulted on and a final plan will be eventually presented to a government inspector for approval.

As of this moment there is still no decision regarding the huge Sunnica Solar Farm.

During this year the Council has obtained a number of government grants to invest in local services and helped many different community groups thrive through the cost-of-living issues.

I myself have helped various local groups with my locality budget including Gazeley children's play area, village newsletters and websites, supported village events , helped fund speeding traffic equipment and signage.

Once again, I will have a new locality budget for this year so if I can help let me know.

In the 19 years I have represented the ward, without doubt this is the most excited I have been with this current administration.

#### **06 TO RECEIVE VILLAGE GROUPS ANNUAL REPORTS**

All village group reports will form part of the Parish Council's Annual Report, available at [www.gazeleypc.co.uk](http://www.gazeleypc.co.uk)

#### **07 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

None

Meeting closed at **6.53pm**

..... (to be signed in 2025)

Chairman  
Gazeley Parish Council

May 2025