

## **PLAYFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Annual Meeting  
13<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

### **Chairman's Report**

Overall it has been a peaceful year for the Parish with a number of potential developments and changes in the district which may well impact on the lives of those in the village in the future. These include Electoral Boundary changes; housing requirements over the next ten to fifteen years; and recommendations arising from the recently completed Parish Plan.

As usual there have been a number of planning applications. In the main these have comprised fairly small developments of existing properties which had little or no impact on the environment or their neighbours. We did suggest with regard to the proposal for two new houses on the 'Sevenoaks' site the access proposed off Church Lane should be altered and access provided via the existing entrance off Butts Lane. At appeal, however, this was not accepted. Of greater interest was the proposal to develop an enormous burial site in Tuddenham. There was great opposition from all parishes - Tuddenham, Grundisburgh, Playford and Great Bealings - on the grounds of potential environmental impact, change of use of high class agricultural land, and impact on traffic flow. It was also felt that the proposed plans were quite unsuitable for the purpose intended, and far in excess of potential need. Despite initial support for this from Planning Officers it was interesting that the proposal was rejected unanimously by the Planning Committee - a resounding victory for local democracy!

### **Electoral Boundary Changes**

The major feature of the discussions, which have taken place with regard to possible changes, has been the failure to date for any conclusion to be reached. You will be aware that the original proposal two years ago was rejected by the Minister. Subsequently two unitary councils were proposed, one to consist of an Ipswich/Felixstowe council, incorporating a number of adjacent parishes including Playford, with the remainder of the county forming a second rural unitary. A public meeting was held for residents of Playford, Great and Little Bealings to discuss the new proposals, together with the possibility of a single unitary council for the whole of Suffolk, and the further possibility of a three unitary solution, namely Ipswich; East Suffolk; and West Suffolk. Playford Parish Council concluded that they should support the single unitary proposal. If however the Boundary Commission's decision was to persist with its original recommendation, then we strongly recommended that Playford should be included in the rural Suffolk council rather than the Ipswich/Felixstowe option. (Discussion with members of the Boundary Commission at an open meeting suggested that they would be responsive to recommendations of this kind.) However, there has been further postponement of a decision by the Boundary Commission.

## **Housing Development - Local Development Strategy**

A Local Development Strategy Group has been working intensively to examine ways of meeting the Government's requirements for increasing numbers of houses within the District. It has been proposed that, by 2021, a further 1,000 houses over and above those already planned would be needed in the areas in and around Ipswich. A proposal was submitted for consultation for five areas, one of which involved Playford parish, adjacent to and north of the A1214 (Kesgrave Road). We considered this quite inappropriate but suggested that the most appropriate of the other four areas would be that around the BT site in Martlesham. The Strategy Group subsequently concluded that only one of the five sites would be recommended; that the Playford site was the least suitable and the BT site the most suitable.

An additional element of their recommendations was a system of classification of villages and towns within the District with regard to their suitability for different levels of development. Playford parish has been classified as 'other', which is the lowest level of possible development. This decision is based on facilities within the parish and does not preclude any development but would restrict it to fairly small changes which would depend on the Parish Plan.

## **Environment**

As usual we have ongoing concerns with regard to maintaining the local environment to a high standard.. We have had persistent problems with the destruction of verges by heavy goods vehicles, some in relation to farming practice, others due to building works. This is a difficult problem to solve and remains a responsibility for all of us although we are discussing solutions with the Highways Department.

We have provided a new litter bin on the green triangle, and are proposing to get a larger 'Dog Poo' bin.

## **Community Life**

We are very pleased with the continuing improvements in the social life of the village provided by the Parish Hall, playground and boules piste and will continue to provide a grant to support community events.

## **Parish Plan**

I am glad to report that the Parish Plan has now been completed and copies are available on request. An exhibition was held in the Parish Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> May as well as in Bealings over the preceding weekend. You will all be aware that this plan was produced as a combined effort by the three parishes - Playford, Great Bealings, and Little Bealings. There were 32 proposed actions covering all aspects of life in the Parish, derived from extensive consultation with residents, stakeholders and householders. Many thanks and congratulations are due to the very large number of people who responded to the

questionnaires and focussed interviews. We are most grateful for our three representatives, Ann Seward, Joan Metcalf, Eileen Stennett and Tracy Hanson for all their work on the steering group

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow councillors for the support and help they have provided and, in particular, Sarah Cartwright the Parish Clerk for the enormous amount of work she puts in and Paul Gardiner for his overview of our finances.

JLD 3/5/09.