

Playford Annual Parish Meeting

16th May 2007

Playford Village Hall

1. Role of the Parish Council

Appendix 1, 2, 3

2. Council Matters

District Council

Retirement of John Leggett (Witnesham Ward) before the May election. We thank John for representing us so diligently over the years. Kate Waddell was elected in May (Appendix 5).

Parish Council

During 2006 we were joined by Mrs Tessa Innes and Dr John Day who were co-opted to replace Ted Herrington and Jill Ganzoni. Colin Snowden stood down before the May election and has been replaced by Ted Herrington who stood unopposed. Full details of the Parish Council are in appendix 5.



Thanks to all members of the Parish Council who have over the last year considered numerous government documents, publications, emails and planning applications.

Attendance

David Lewis	6/6
Tracy Hanson	6/6
Charles Lofts	6/6
Tessa Innes	4/6
June Gosling	6/6
Colin Snowden	4/6
John Day	5/6

Average number of attendees: 4

3. Parish Website

<http://www.onesuffolk.co.uk/PlayfordPC>

The website continues to develop. It contains sections on the Parish Council including the minutes of all meetings since September 2006. It also contains sections on the Church, Local History, a Diary and a Photo Gallery. Sarah Cartwright our Clerk is the current Webmaster. For those wishing to help please contact Sarah on:

Mrs Sarah Cartwright	Clerk to the Council	Hillside The Street Little Bealings IP13 6LJ	01473 621050	playfordpc@hotmail.co.uk
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4. John Belstead Playing Field



In November 2006 we were approached by members of the John Belstead Playing Field Project. This ambitious project to create a wonderful recreation facility for the populations of Playford, Little an Great Bealings was unanimously supported by the Parish Council. We agreed to contribute our share (£660) of the local play equipment grant for 2006/7.

5. SID

Speed Indicator Display : Butts Lane – Mean Speed 32mph

6. Abolition of the Slave Trade



Brian Seward surpassed himself in organising a major event in the village on 25th March to celebrate the links between Playford and Clerkson and his role in the abolition of the slave trade. Many members of the Clerkson family attended, the Wordsworth family were also represented as was the Ipswich Caribbean Association.

7. Parish Plan

Whilst not a statutory requirement it is highly recommended that all Parishes develop a Parish Plan and indeed a target has been set by Suffolk Coastal of 60% by 2008 and 100% by 2010. Playford Parish Council agreed to co-host a meeting of the 3 Parishes (Playford, Little and Great Bealings) to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of producing a Parish Plan and to consider whether we should work together as 3 Parishes or proceed on our own.

Over 100 people attended and it was agreed by a majority to proceed with a joint steering committee and consultation phase together. A decision on the production of joint or separate Action Plans was deferred until after the questionnaire results have been analysed.

Appendix 1

The Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting is not a meeting of the Parish Council. The Local Government Act 1972 dictates that a parish meeting must assemble annually on some day between March 1^{st.} and June 1^{st.} and that local residents may speak on any matter of local interest.

The Parish Council is charged with the task of organising such a meeting, which may not begin prior to 6 p.m. Not less than seven clear days public notice is to be given of the meeting. The 1972 Act says that the Chairman of the Parish Council must preside over the meeting if he is present. If he is absent then the Vice-Chairman must preside. If neither is in attendance, the meeting elects a chairman from those local government electors for the parish present.

Though a parish meeting may discuss parish affairs, its resolutions (if any) differ considerably in their legal consequences. In the majority of cases a resolution is persuasive only; the parish council may legally disregard it and leave the electors to their remedy at the next election. Unlike a parish council meeting, a parish meeting is not required to vote in any particular way, and so the chairman may ascertain the effect of the voting from any evidence which may in the circumstances lead to an accurate result; thus a voice vote may in the case of an overwhelming majority be sufficient, but when opposing opinions are represented with approximate equality, a count must be taken. Only those registered as electors in the parish may vote although any member of the public may attend the meeting. The chairman's declaration of the result is final.

The right of the parish meeting to discuss parish affairs extends to any public matter of a parochial nature and is not confined to the exercise of the statutory nature of the parish council. The parish meeting may accordingly pass resolutions on the public activities or policies in the parish of any other local authority, public body, government department or public service provided that they affect the parish specially and are not such as are calculated to affect the whole country or all parishes equally.

Appendix 2

What is a Parish Council?

It is the first tier of Local Government and was created by statute in 1894.

Before 1894, for many years, the affairs of the parishes had been administered by a vestry, or meeting of the village inhabitants. Inevitably these meetings were dominated by the squire, the parson and the principal ratepayers and some became ‘select vestries’, only open to those people deemed ‘suitable’ to serve. In many parishes, particularly rural ones, the system worked perfectly well, in others it was virtually non-existent or very inefficient.

For a variety of reasons, including a general movement towards greater ‘democracy’; and a desire to break the power of the Church of England over the lives of nonconformists and non-believers, a Bill was promoted to create Parish Councils. After a difficult passage through parliament and many amendments, this Bill became an Act in 1894. Its effect was to transfer all non ecclesiastical functions from the church to the elected Parish Councils. Some other functions were added, such as those relating to the burial of the dead, which had, many years before, been vested in Burial Boards, an early form of QUANGO.

The regulations under which the first Parish Councils operated were not very tight at that stage and the influence of the church was not so easily to be diminished.

(Parish Government, 1894 -1994, by K P Poole and Brian Keith-Lucas, published by The National Association of Local Councils in 1994)

“In the choice of chairmen of parish councils there was considerable evidence of traditional deference.

In the old vestries the parson had always taken the chair and now nearly one parish in five chose the parson as their first chairman, co-opting him for that purpose if he had not been elected to the council.”

There were many anomalies and difficulties encountered in the years between 1894 and 1972, when the present basic Local Government Act came into being. A full and very entertaining account of these years can be found in the above quoted book.

Much has changed since 1894, despite the impression given by the “*The Vicar of Dibley*” TV series. Parish Councils are closely regulated and the amount of administrative bureaucracy and red tape has increased exponentially in the past few years, with an accompanying rise in costs of audit and insurance. On the other hand, with lines of responsibility more clearly drawn, there now appears to be no general animosity towards the church and some villages still have the parson on the Parish Council. That is, if s/he has the time to spare, because the church has also changed considerably, with greatly enlarged parishes, few curates and the same problem with red tape and mountains of post.

Powers and Responsibilities of Parish Councils

The Local Government Act, 1972, is the one most often referred to when describing the modern powers and responsibilities of Parish Councils but it is augmented by many earlier and later Acts, such as *The Criminal Justice and Public Order, Act 1994*, which, on the face of it, would not appear to relate to Parish Councils but which gave them a long needed ability to pay for measures to combat crime and the fear of crime in villages.

Parish Councils may only spend public money on projects or actions for which they have a Statutory Power. Breaking this rule is likely to result in a PC's accounts being refused by the auditor and, possibly, the individual councillors being required to repay the money illegally expended. For those of an enquiring nature, a list of the legislation conferring some of these powers appears at the end of this section.

There is still, as there was in 1894, only one power which the Parish Council must consider using and that is to provide allotments for the labouring poor, if asked for them. All other powers are voluntary - the Parish Council is not obliged to exercise them and indeed the majority would find it difficult to raise enough money to exercise them all on a permanent basis.

Raising the wind

Parish Councils are empowered to raise money for their activities through a tax (the "precept") on the village residents which is collected on their behalf by the District Council, as an addition to the District and County Council Tax. This is then paid to the Parish Council in two equal instalments.

Two neighbouring Parish Councils might require the same amount of money to function but the fewer houses there are in a village, the more each household is obliged to pay towards raising this sum. Thus, the actual tax paid by similar houses in neighbouring villages could differ widely. Though not actually 'capped' in their expenditure, as are the Principal Councils, the activities of many smaller Parish Councils are effectively limited by this difficulty; to what, in vulgar parlance, *'the market can stand'*. To combat this, smaller councils are being encouraged to combine for some large projects and share the expense across a wider base.

Borrowing is allowed, up to a prescribed limit and with permission, but this is of limited help to a small parish because, of course, the loan (plus interest) has to be repaid from slim resources.

Grants may be obtained for specific purposes from various sources, not least the District Council. Very few, if any of these, can be used for maintenance or general administration purposes.

Limited fund raising can be done but this is so hedged about by restrictions that, in the main, it is hardly worthwhile for a very small council.

Some Statutory Powers of Parish and Town Councils

Local Government Act 1972

s.101	Assume a function delegated by another authority
s.111	Ensure effective discharge of council functions
s.112	Employ someone to carry out council functions
s.124	Buy or lease land for the community
s.142	Publicise council and local authority functions
s.144	Encourage tourism
s.145	Provide entertainment
s.150	Raise money by precept (Council Tax)
s.175	Train councillors
s.214	Assume responsibility for a closed churchyard
s.222	Make representation at public enquiries
s.226	Acquire historical records
Sch.13	Borrow money
Sch.16 para 20	Comment upon planning applications

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953

s.4	Provide bus shelters
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Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

s.19	Provide or support recreational facilities
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Open Spaces Act 1906

s.9	Acquire and manage any open space including valuable habitats.
s.10	Administer open space held in trust Provide lighting for any open space

Commons Act 1899

s.5	Manage common land
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Public Health Act 1875

s.164 (see also LGA, 1972 sch. 14 para 27)	Acquire and manage land for a village green Provide parks, pleasure grounds, public walks Make bylaws to prevent dog fouling or to ban dogs
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Public Health Act 1961

s.54	Provide a boating lake
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Public Health Act 1936

- s.87 Maintain public toilets
- s.125 Use a local water course to obtain water
- s.260 Maintain a local water course

The Countryside Act 1958

- s.27 Erect signs for a right of way

Highways Act 1980

- s.30 Create a right of way
- s.43 Maintain a right of way
- s.96 Plant verges with trees shrubs and bulbs (with Highways Authority consent)

Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

- s.57 Take action to relieve traffic congestion
Provide Parking facilities

Parish Councils Act 1957

- s.1 Provide roadside seats (with Highways Authority consent)
- s.3 (see also LGA 1972 Sch14, para 34) Provide lighting for footways and public places

Litter Act 1983

- s.5 Provide litter bins

Smallholding and allotments Act 1908

- s.26 Provide allotments
- s.34 Acquire land for common pasture

Local Government (Records) Act 1962

- s.1 Make community records available to the public
- s.2 Purchase records of local interest
- s.4 Support local archives

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

- s.16 Make agreement with English Nature to manage council-owned land as nature reserve.

Appendix 3

There are three tiers of local government in Suffolk:

• **Suffolk County Council**

Suffolk County Council is responsible for the major services that are provided across the whole county. These include:

- o Education: Schools, community education, higher education grants
- o Social Care: Caring for the elderly, those with physical or learning disabilities, those with mental health problems, and children and families that need protection and support.
- o Libraries & Heritage: Lending books, CDs and videos; providing information and reference services; providing public access to IT; managing records offices and archives; supporting arts and museums.
- o Highways Safety and Improvement: Maintaining and improving roads and pavements; promoting and implementing road safety measures.
- o Transport: Co-ordinating and supporting public transport.
- o Environment: Waste disposal; maintaining footpaths and Rights of Way; conserving the countryside and public access to it; archaeological services.
- o Public Safety: Fire and fire safety; Trading Standards.

• **7 District and Borough Councils In Suffolk**

These provide services in their local areas, such as:

- o Environmental Health
- o Housing
- o Planning/Building Control
- o Waste Collection
- o Licensing
- o Leisure & Tourism
- o Electoral Registers
- o Pest & Dog Control

• **419 Parish and Town Councils in Suffolk**

These have responsibilities only in their immediate area and sometimes in conjunction with other councils for the likes of:

- o Allotments
- o Bus Shelters
- o Cemeteries
- o Markets
- o Public Conveniences
- o Public Open Spaces and Playing Fields
- o Planting and Maintaining Road Verges etc.
- o Village Halls and Community Centres

Appendix 4

Code of Conduct

The Ten General Principles

The general principles governing your conduct under the *Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001* are set out below:

Selflessness

1. Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

2. Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

3. Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

4. Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness

5. Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgement

6. Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

7. Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

8. Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship


9. Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

10. Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

Appendix 5

County Councillor

<p>Name: Peter Bellfield Ward: Carlford Part: Conservative The Old Rectory Grundisburgh Road Clopton Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 6QB Tel: 01473 735259 Fax: 01473 735859 Email: peter.bellfield@suffolkcc.gov.uk Committee Appointments Resources, Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee (Chairman) Scrutiny Management Board Statement of Accounts Sub-Committee (Vice-Chairman)</p>	
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District Councillor

Name: Kate Waddell.

Ward: Witnesham

Party: Conservative

Parish(es): Playford, Swilland, Tuddenham St Martin, Westerfield, Witnesham.

Address:

The Willows,
Giles Way,
Witnesham,
Ipswich IP6 9HB.

Telephone: 01473 785174

Email: kate.waddell@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Suffolk Coastal District Council

Election of Parish Councillors

For the Area of

PLAYFORD Parish

RESULT OF UNCONTESTED ELECTION

I, the undersigned, being the returning officer, do hereby certify that at the election of Parish Councillors for the above mentioned Parish, the following persons stood validly nominated at the latest time for delivery of notices of withdrawal of candidature, namely Noon on Wednesday, 11th April 2007 and have been duly elected Parish Councillors for the said Parish without contest.

NAME OF PERSONS ELECTED	HOME ADDRESS
Day, John Leigh	Playford Grange Gt Bealings Woodbridge IP13 6PH
Gosling, June Madeline	The Gooses Nest The Street Playford Ipswich IP6 9DP
Hanson, Tracy Jane	Archway Cottage Playford Ipswich IP6 9DP
Herrington, Robert Edward	Clematis Cotage Playford Mount Great Bealings Woodbridge IP13 6PJ
Innes, Theresa Frances	Playford Hall Playford Ipswich IP6 9DX
Lewis, David Adam Alexander	Brook House Brook Lane Playford Ipswich IP6 9DY
Lofts, Charles Duncan	Hill House Hill Farm Road Playford Ipswich IP6 9DT

Dated: Tuesday, 24 April 2007

S Baker
Returning Officer

Suffolk Coastal District Council
Melton Hill
Woodbridge
Suffolk
IP12 1AU