

Grundisburgh & Culpho Parish Council
Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 8th August, 2019
in St.Mary's Church, Grundisburgh

NOTICES had been posted according with regulations.

Present: - Messrs. S Barnett, G.Caryer, P.Franklin, D.Higgins, P.Kendall (in the Chair), J.Lapsley, Mrs J Bignell, Mrs.A.Willetts, Mr P Knights (Clerk to The Council), and 130 members of the public.

1) Apologies for Absence:

Mr C Burch, Mr J Dunnett

2) Members Declarations of Interest:

Mr P Kendall, Mrs J Bignell, Mrs A Willetts and Mr D Higgins declared non-pecuniary interests in Grundisburgh Village Hall

The Chairman explained that this meeting had been called to enable the Parish Council to formulate its response to the County Councils proposals for an Ipswich Northern Bypass, and that this meeting was a single agenda meeting to discuss this matter only by way of a Public Open Forum, after which the Council would remain in closed session to reflect on the points raised and base a response to Suffolk County Council and other relevant authorities on them. It was intended that a further public meeting would be held in order that the Councils response could be shared with residents before submission to the relevant authorities.

Before the Public Forum was opened Mrs Willetts requested that she read out a statement from Suffolk County Council's Northern By-Pass Proposal which would give context to the debate to follow:

The County Council's Northern Proposal Documentation states that the By-Pass:

- Might help with traffic congestion in central Ipswich
- Might improve job opportunities for the local population
- Might stimulate economic growth in the area

However, in Mrs Willet's opinion, despite the "mights" above, the proposal "will" should it proceed:

- The By-Pass will destroy numerous village communities
- The By-Pass will forever disfigure the beautiful rural area around Grundisburgh
- The By-Pass will wipe out huge swathes of important special habitats for our wildlife
- The By-Pass will impair our tranquil way of rural life
- The By-Pass will affect all of us forever

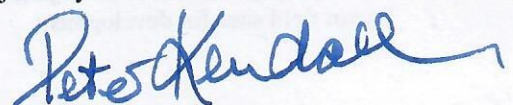
Following delivery of the above statement, Mrs Willett's received an enthusiastic round of applause from the public.

The Chairman then requested a proposer to open the Public Forum to discuss the agenda item, which was proposed by Mr Franklin and seconded by Mrs Bignell.

3) Public Open Forum – The Parish Council's Response to The Northern By-Pass Proposal

The Chair then invited comment from the Public and the following responses were recorded:

- Earlier Options such as a second Orwell crossing dismissed on cost grounds – the NBP is much more expensive
- A Trojan Horse for a new Town
- Kier Group own the appointed project consultants – lack of objectivity and vested interest in the NBP



- No demand or the associated new housing
- Project costs quoted are projected construction costs only, not land acquisition and compulsory purchase compensation, legal costs etc.
- Alternatives do not seem to have been assessed or considered
- Tell us what the alternatives are
- Lack of clear information – how can we be expected to make an informed judgement?
- Dualling of Felixstowe Port rail link would remove HGV demand
- Introduce congestion charge zone in Ipswich instead
- No information on the number of households at risk of compulsory purchase
- Its all about new homes and income for SCC
- Why do SCC want it? We need to know
- What about solar pollution?
- Has the Council reviewed similar projects post completion to assess real benefits accruing?
- Object as lack of proper consultation with PCs
- Road schemes introduce more road traffic
- Unacceptable loss of rural heritage and landscapes
- Irreparable damage to wildlife, habitats and biodiversity
- LSE research shows positive impacts of such schemes is very low and poor value
- Local Authority is not following its duty to consult with us clearly
- What are the 26 other options as mentioned in the NBP document?
- Orwell Bridge only closes 4 or 5 times a year!
- What about the environment and all current government policy to reduce CO2 emissions and protect the environment??
- Total lack of information
- They must justify it and demonstrate the needs and benefits

The Open Public Forum was a lively session with a good level of participation from the assembled. The foregoing public responses were espoused in duplicate from a good number of residents. It was therefore clear that the majority of residents opposed the By-Pass Proposal.

Mrs Willetts then presented a “tranquillity” map of the area. Tranquillity of localities can be measured scientifically against a weighted formula of environmental factors, and The Campaign to Protect Rural England has a tranquillity map of the entire country – Grundisburgh and the surrounding area is assessed at the highest classification of tranquillity being “green”. CPRE is holding planning authorities to account for damaging areas of tranquillity when they have not utilised or exhausted brown field sites for development.

Peter Kendall

The Chair expressed the opinion that if all are opposed to the By-Pass Proposal then we should oppose all three current route options so that we can stand together in opposition with the other Parish Council's and the STOP! campaign. The Chair then put this proposal to the Public Forum for a vote by way of a show of hands. All present confirmed by raising their hand that they opposed all three By-Pass options, and that they would wish to join forces with the other Parish Councils affected against the scheme, and utilise the resources of the STOP! Campaign.

The Chair reminded the assembly that there is an on-line consultation questionnaire which they ought to complete, and that there would be paper versions in St Mary's Church from the following Monday for those who do not have access to the internet. However, the consultation questionnaire is angled at gathering the responses the Council wants to justify the proposal, so care is needed when completing it. Reference should be made to the STOOP! Campaign guidance.

At 8:50pm Mr Kendall Proposed that the Public Open Forum be closed, seconded by Mr Lapsley. Members of the public left the meeting.

4) Closed Session – Discussions on Parish Council's Response to The Northern By-Pass Proposals

It was unanimously agreed that the response of the Parish Council was opposition of all three By-Pass options currently being tabled. This is entirely consistent with the feedback from the Public Open Forum session.

Our response should be based on (not necessarily listed in any order of priority):

- Ineffective consultation process
- Lack of credible information on which to assess the proposal
- Lack of supporting evidence to justify the need for the By-Pass
- Lack of information regarding other available options (how can we be assured the best options are being promoted?)
- Unacceptable environmental impact – diametrically opposed to the Council's declared climate emergency
- No demand or need for up to 20,000 new dwellings for the Ipswich conurbation

It was agreed that the Councillors would submit their thoughts in summary to the Chair within one week in order that a response could be drafted.

Additional considerations discussed:

- Once the response has been agreed an appointment should be made with Suffolk County Council to talk it through with them – chief officers rather than Councillors as they are the ones driving the agenda.
- We should join forces with the other Parish Councils involved and remain resolute with them against all three proposals to avoid being "divided" by either a favoured proposal or the County Council.
- We should use the resources of the STOP! Campaign where relevant.
- Investigate the legality of donating funds to the STOP! Campaign.
- Enlist the support of other agencies such as CPRE, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, and media/journalists, although STOP! Will already be doing this, and we must be consistent in message to avoid being counter-productive.

It was agreed that a further EGM be scheduled to finalise the Council's official response, therefore item 5) of the published agenda was carried forward to the next EGM

The Chair closed the meeting at 9:45pm

Peter Knights
Clerk to Grundisburgh and Culpho Parish Council

