

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 20th May 2024, at Otley Village Hall.

Present: Clerk: Mrs M Hunt

Chairman: Mr Anthony Ling (AL)

Councillors Present: Mr M Bowers (MB) Mr M Hunt, (MH) Mrs E Flint (EF) Mrs

Claire Gasson (CG) Mr G Grant (GG) Mr M Ellis (ME)

District Councillor: Mr Dan Clery (DC) – Not present

County Councillor: Elaine Bryce (EB) – Not present

Members of the public – Two member of the public were in attendance.

Meeting opened at 7.pm

1.) Nomination of Chairperson – AL as current chair was proposed by MB and seconded by ME to chair this meeting. All in favour.

2.) Apologies for Absence – Apologies have been received from Mrs Abigail Lord (ABL) and Hannah Rigby Executive Headteacher Otley and Winesham Federated Primary Schools. These apologies were formally accepted by those present accepted.

3.) Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2023 – **It was resolved** that these minutes, which have been previously circulated prior to this meeting were signed by AL as a true correct record and approved by all Councillors present.

4.) Matters arising – None

5.) Chairperson's Report – Given by Chairperson AL as follows -

Good evening to you all. I am Anthony Ling, Chairman of Otley Parish Council. I wish to welcome you to the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council. The purpose of the meeting tonight is to review the activities of the Parish Council since the last Annual Meeting in 2023. Our district councillors are Dan Clery and Colin Hedgley. I would like to take the opportunity to thank them both for their support over the year. I must also thank Elaine Bryce for her continued support this year and I know she hasn't been able to attend the number of meetings she would have liked but we know she is always there for us.

The Council is usually made up of nine members although we have only eight currently. Sue Montgomery decided to retire from the council last year and we thank her for her service over the years and wish her well for the future. We welcomed Miles Ellis as a new councillor this year and as one of the youngest members we have ever had it's great to see a new generation interested in village affairs. Mary Hunt has been our Clerk and she has done a wonderful job of keeping us informed of all PC matters, handling the finances and responding to planning applications. My thanks go to her for making my job so much easier and I would also like to thank her husband Martin for his support and computer expertise.

The Neighbourhood Planning committee, under the new chairmanship of Gavin Grant are now getting to the final stages of this process. The draft plan has now been out for village consultation with plans being delivered to every household and an open event at the village hall which was well attended. After collating the responses the Plan will be amended, go back to East Suffolk and then onto an independent inspector before being presented to the village in a referendum. This has been a much longer and challenging process than we originally expected. Thank you to all those involved and we look forward to seeing the results of their hard work.

We have seen a number of planning applications in the last year from small extensions to complete houses. As always we check against the current planning policies and our response is always based on these and our local knowledge. We have found the East Suffolk Local Plan to be very comprehensive in guiding our decisions. Thank you to Claire Gasson in particular for her help in formulating our responses.

FIRST RESPONDERS

I am delighted to report that our First Responders team have been active for a year now and have been called out to a considerable number of emergencies. Mike Bowers has spearheaded this excellent initiative and he now has 9 active responders. We will hear more, from their separate report.

SPEED WATCH

Speeding in the village is a constant topic and the community speed watch camera organised by Tony Barrett continues to be used regularly and we would like to thank him and his team for all their efforts. He reports that the main problem area continues to be along the Helmingham Road. The new camera with data recording has thrown up some interesting statistics on speed and vehicle numbers coming through the village. This information can be used to pinpoint exact times to get the police to operate their own speed trap. Thank you to Martin Hunt for looking after the cameras and extracting the information.

HIGHWAYS

The works at Otley Bottom to repair the collapsed bank following storm Babet will finally commence on the 28th May until 23rd July. The road will be closed to all traffic during this time and there will be diversion routes signposted. What impact this will have on minor roads remains to be seen but we will monitor the situation carefully.

We continue to report issues with our roads especially the potholes which seem to appear more rapidly than they are filled. It is a continued source of frustration that roads seemed to be closed unnecessarily for minor works, some days it can be quite hard to leave the village!

RIGHTS OF WAY

The PC continues to arrange for the cutting of the footpaths and this work is funded by the East Suffolk P3 scheme. We monitor the state of footpaths and footbridges, reporting any broken sleepers or signs as necessary. East Suffolk seem to be getting these jobs done in a reasonable time frame although we do report some problems several times.

Finally my thanks go to all the Councillors for the work they do and their support of myself and Mary.

Another Member of the Public arrived at 7.15pm

6.) Presentation of draft Parish Council accounts – Clerk / RFO gave their report as follows -

PRESENTATION OF DRAFT PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS – 20th MAY 2024.

Balance at start of the year 1st April 2023 was £6,262.47

1.) RECEIPTS

The precept of £5,863.33 was received. This was an increase of £519.58 from 2022/23 giving a 2% increase charge to households.

Suffolk County Council have continued to reimburse the cost of cutting the village rural paths and we received £1,572.32 in respect of the P3 Scheme.

£ 1,144.57 was claimed in VAT and received into our accounts in April 2023

We have received two Neighbourhood CIL Payments this year one in April of £1,737.66 and the second one in October of £9,098.02 giving a total of £10,835.68.

The total receipts for this year amounted to £ 24,278.23 an increase from the previous year of £14,811.94 which is a considerable amount. The CIL payments and the Neighbourhood Plan grant of £4,341 will have contributed to this increase, as well as VAT and an increase in interest payment which are received into the Community Account this amounted for the year to £200.35.

2.) PAYMENTS

Total payments for the year amounted to £13,297.45 of this £3,400.84 was spent on Goods and Services and are included in the list below under 4.

This year the Parish Council had the Village Sign refurbished at a cost of £480. Purchased a Pavement Board and Chalk Pens to advertise the Parish Council Meetings at a cost £40.31. The Village Christmas Tree £50 and following a suggestion from the Auditor for the Parish Council to have a secure email system for the Clerk and Councillors. This was set up at a cost of £280.50, and will be an ongoing cost, although an application to our County Councillor to fund part of this cost for the year 2024/25 has been submitted. We have been advised that this will be a one off and the monies will be available towards the end of the year for the Parish Council to claim.

Other payments have been made under the following Sections

s133 = £350 (£100 to Community Council, £250 to Community First Response)

s137 = £100 to East Anglian Air Ambulance

s142 = £50 to Royal British Legion

3.) COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY MONIES

From CIL monies received in October 2022 of this £1,150.82 has been spent and given to the following groups. The Community Orchard to purchase a lawn mower, and the Junior Drama Group to purchase privacy screens and a clothes steamer. We have until October 2027 to spend the remaining £625.73. In total we have £11,461.41 in CIL monies this is made up of the £10,835.68 plus the £625.73.

It should be noted that prior to CIL being implemented there was Section106 monies. The village has access to some of this unspent monies, approximately £60,000. Various projects have been identified to spend this money on but it is considered that there will be a short fall. Therefore it is likely the Parish Council will be approached to meet some of this using the CIL money we hold.

4.) COST TO RUN THE PARISH COUNCIL.

To enable the Parish Council to run without funding any additional items this year has been £3,400.84 this figure includes the following. (This is an increase of £265.87 from last year).

SALC membership = £329.59

Newland Licence = £55.67

Internal Audit = £202.80

Hall Hire = £162.50

Stationary = £94.48

Annual Insurance = £304

Community Heartbeat /Defib = £162

Annual Data Protection Cover = £35

Annual Website hosting =£60

Clerk Salary = £1,714.30

Secure E-mail System = £280.50

5.) THE INTERNAL AUDIT is booked to take place the week beginning 3rd June 2024. The Documentation regarding the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) has been prepared. The Auditor from SALC will sign “Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24 Section. Approval of the Accounts will be signed off by the Parish Council at the AGM following this meeting. If anyone wishes to see the accounts then the dates of the period of exercise of public rights (30 working days) will be Monday 1st July – Friday 9th August 2024.

Everything will be available on line to view by this start date if not sooner. In compliance with the transparency code and publication of AGAR information is required to be available online by Monday 1st July 2024. Alternatively feel free to contact the clerk for a paper copy.

Mary Hunt Clerk /RFO.
May 2024.

7.) District Councillor’s and County Councillor’s Report – No reports received. The following day apologies received from District Councillors Mr Dan Clery.

8.) Otley Primary School Report – read out by AL

Otley Primary School Report
(For the use of the Parish Council)



Number on role: 48

Staffing:

Executive Headteacher: Mrs H. Rigby

Executive Deputy Headteacher: Mrs K. Engels

SENDCO and Executive Deputy Headteacher: Miss J. Debenham

Class structures:

Class 1: Reception and Year 1

Year 2: Year 2 (mornings)

Class 2: Year 3 and 4

Class 3: Year 5 and 6

Current school priorities:

*Safeguarding remains a priority through all that we do.

- Ensure the wider curriculum is planned effectively, including for mixed age classes and EYFS
- Writing outcomes will continue to improve in Key Stage 2
- Children’s reading books and activities will match their phonic knowledge, offer appropriate challenge and meet specific needs, whilst further embedding VIPERS skills across the school
- SENDCO to ensure that the assess, plan, do, review cycle is in place and precisely identifies need
- Subject leaders to have a good understanding of their curriculum areas, including knowledge of the sequence of the curriculum
- EYFS Staff will deliver a well-planned curriculum to mixed age classes
- The outdoor area will be a purposeful and enabling learning environment

Achievements this academic year:

- Enrichment: Visits from theatre companies, financial experts for children, mental health teams, emergency services, seaside visit, zoo visit, swimming each term for year 3 and 4 children
- Additional clubs for children including dance and gardening club, which have been well attended
- Extensive involvement from the church for Christmas, Harvest and Easter festivals (thank you!)
- Mother’s day event which was very well attended
- Christmas carol concert for the community
- Close working with the Otley PTA
- **We have implemented a new curriculum to ensure high standards for all children**

9.) Otley Community Council Report – Read out by AL

OTLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT MAY 2024

During the past year, the position of Chairman has been held by myself, along with the post of Bookings Secretary, Paul Baker has held the post of Treasurer, Sue Montgomery has been Vice-Chair and Christie Page has been Secretary.

The Village Hall has continued to host a good number of regular groups, including Pilates, Tap Dancing, Suffolk Singers, Horn Factory, Junior TOPS, TOADS and the Crafting Group. We've welcomed back the Friendship club on Thursday afternoons and have a new regular Toddler Football session on a Monday morning. Our number of private hires has continued to grow, and we are seeing more parties and one-off bookings again.

Our biggest fundraiser of the year was the fete. The weather was lovely and we had a good turnout. We welcomed back the Samba band and Emily Nightingale ran the popular Dog Show for the first time. As well as the famous egg-throwing and tug-of-war, it was great to see some new things in the ring including sack racing and space hopper races! Thanks particularly to Tony for taking on the role of chief organiser, but also to everyone else who played a part in making it so successful.

The fireworks display is another highlight of the village calendar, and again we had a large turnout of people, which was great to see. We'd like to think we're getting a reputation for putting on a great display at reasonable prices. We sold burgers, which were left over from the fete (frozen, obviously!) and they proved a big hit – but maybe at the expense of the soup, which didn't go as well as usual. Of course, the night could not go ahead without the time and skills of Mike Bullock, so our thanks to him, and his trusty team!

A new event for us, held a few weeks ago, was the Ceilidh. I understand it was a great night, and thank you so much to Julie, one of our new Committee members, for organizing it, and everyone who helped. Hopefully it's an evening that can be repeated.

The hall itself has benefited from new shelves in the front storage room, which has made it a lot tidier. Our square table, which was once the dining table of Geoff and Kath Cant, has been taken by Jonathan Ellis for a spruce up. The squirrel in the loft has been an on-going saga - it has joined in everything from tap-dancing to Pilates! Thanks to the efforts of Miles, we are, for the moment, squirrel-free. We have had a problem with our lovely floor lifting, which we think is due to the huge amount of rain we've had this winter. We are keeping our fingers crossed that it's not lasting damage and it will resettle.

We have a number of on-going projects, but particularly this coming year, we're looking at refreshing the toilet blocks and continuing to sort out storage. The main hall is also desperately in need of painting.

Although we are a business, in the sense that we need to make money to cover our costs and projects, the Community is important. We subsidise the monthly Cuppa and Cake, where anyone can come down for a chat, and I must also mention the orchard. The fabulous group of volunteers, led by Caroline, have turned an overgrown piece into a really lovely corner of the playing field. The Village Hall is important in the Community in so many ways - thank you to everyone who helps in any way.

10.) Community First Response Report – Read out by AL

The Community First Responders team have been active for a year now and have been called out to a considerable number of emergencies. Mike Bowers has spearheaded this excellent initiative and he now has 9 active responders. They have all received many hours of training, followed by exams and then experience with ambulance crews and other first responders. There are now 4 from Otley and two from Clopton as well as others from Swilland and Henley covering an area within a three mile radius of the village. They now have 3 full kits with a fourth coming soon. Money has been raised by various organisations in the village to help with ongoing costs and the PC has paid for one of the phones for a year. A big thank-you to Mike and all the volunteers who have put a considerable amount of time into this project.

11.) Otley Church Preservation Trust Report – Read out by AL

Report to Annual Parish Meeting Otley Church Preservation Trust, May 2024

The Trust has been in existence for 29 years and has raised valuable funds for the restoration and maintenance of the Church fabric. Without it, much of the work that has been completed could not have been undertaken.

There are six Trustees, three of whom are nominated by the Parochial Church Council and two who represent the interests of the Parish Council. In October 2023 our long-standing secretary, Tess Papworth, stood down as a Trustee. We are most grateful for Tess's dedication to and enthusiasm for the work of the Trust. She was the driving force behind the Trust's Christmas cards and calendars, both of which raised thousands of pounds towards the maintenance of St Mary's. We welcome Tony Russell as a new Trustee. Tony is a chartered surveyor with experience of working on church fabric.

In the year April 2023 to March 2024 money received from the Church donation box, sale of guidebooks, Church boxes distributed to households and investment income amounted to £781.41, compared to the previous year of £344.28. Income continues to recover post the pandemic and with more attractive rates available on investment income.

Income from standing orders fell marginally to £1225. Trustees recognise the long-term move towards a cashless society and encourage residents to consider a standing order for ongoing support of our work. Total income received, including Gift Aid, was £2392.77. Funds held amount to £23 123.40 as of 5th April 2024. The Trustees are grateful to all those who continue to support the Trust's work.

During the year, the Trust assisted with ongoing routine maintenance of the Church fabric. At the time of writing, the quinquennial report is in preparation and the Trustees look forward to considering those items of work to which the Trust will contribute.

As always with a building of St Mary's age and nature, the maintenance demands are ongoing and Trustees will continue their work to raise funds for the preservation of the Church.

Ian Beaumont
Chair, OCPT
16 May 2024

12.) Questions

Meeting Closed at 7.30pm