

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on Monday, 15th April 2019 at 7.00pm in Eyke Village Hall.

Present: Cllr. Fleming in the chair, Cllrs. Stangoe, Thomas and Whitmore, County Councillor Andrew Reid, District Councillor Ray Herring (*from 7.30pm*) seven members of the public and the clerk.

Apologies: Cllrs. Abu-Hejleh and Cushing, Mrs Clements, Ms Fairweather, Mr Fisher, Mrs Macfarlane, Mr Marr, Mr Sutch, Mrs Watson.

Minutes: Those of the Annual Parish Meeting of 14th May 2018, having been previously circulated, were taken as read, agreed and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising: None.

Adjournment for Parish Forum: none requested.

Reports:

Cllr. Andrew Reid. SCC. The focus of the report was on three areas: Finance, Education and Infrastructure. Finance: From 2011 to date over £260M of savings have been made in response to cuts in funding from Central Government in the face of greater demands on services. For the year 2019/20 the proposed savings will be around £13M, to help balance the budget, which is required by law.

Education: This year, the Council will spend £10M per week across all its services, 75% of which will be for Adult and Community Services, and Health, Wellbeing and Children's Services.

There has been considerable improvement in performance by school students. In 2012 Suffolk was 137th out of 151 in performance at GCSE and by 2018 were 42nd in Maths and English.

The demand for specialist education is growing for children with complex needs and more places will be created. Suffolk will need 300 to 400 between now and 2020, a figure which is likely to keep rising.

Infrastructure: The push to achieve superfast broadband coverage has been an ambitious goal, but it is estimated that by 2020 the coverage will be 98%. There will be a continued push to deliver the final 2%.

The County Council has been disappointed with the progress since 2012 of EDF's proposals for Sizewell C and have made this clear in its response. The lack of data provided has led the Council to respond as a worst case scenario. The environment is sensitive, the road network will be under a great strain. They are looking to EDF to deliver more, and would not rule out a further stage of consultation.

The Council is also concerned about Scottish Power renewables and its plan to build substations in the Friston/Sternfield area for the power coming ashore from two windfarms. There would be further substations for more windfarms offshore in the future.

Cllr Reid then left the meeting.

Neighbourhood Watch. (*Written report from Mrs Macfarlane and Mrs Watson*) Most people have signed up to the "Nextdoor" site which advises villagers of anything to be reported. There has been little to note this year. Mrs Watson and Mrs Macfarlane would like to hand over the Neighbourhood Watch role after many years of operation to someone who could deal with it in a more up to date capacity.

Eyke Charities. (*Written Report from Mr Sutch.*) £150 was gifted in cash to Eyke villagers, and £99.14 in the form of books to Eyke School leavers during the 2017 calendar year. The charities income of £338.18 exceeded the expenditure of £294.14. The total assets amounted to £9,902, less than the previous year, where the assets stood at £10,202. While this is disappointing, it reflects a general market correction, and the investments continue to produce a yield which should cover the anticipated expenditure. The Charities Commission online records have been updated and new trustee contact details provided as required.

Cllr. Fleming wished to thank Mr Sutch for his work and expertise keeping Eyke Charities on a sound financial footing.

Eyke C of E Primary School. (Written report from Ms Fairweather) During the autumn term KS1 received visits from many people who help us: dentists, vicars, postwomen, nurses, policemen and paramedics. KS2 have studied the history and geography of Dunwich. Much time has been spent on Remembrance Celebrations.

Music has been a strong element, with the school choir singing in a performance of *The Little Prince* at Aldeburgh, working with the Aldeburgh Children's Opera. 14 children have started to learn the violin and viola, with instruments bought for the school.

The Governors have played an active role in the life of the school.

Pupils took part in the All Saints Christmas Tree Festival, where the choir sang. The term ended with the Nativity play *Lights, Camel, Action* performed by KS1.

KS2 studied Ancient Egypt in the spring Term, while KS1 have been studying spring. Academic progress has been good and thanks go to the volunteer readers who have ensured reading progress is good.

Sport is strong in the school, and children have taken part in the Pyramid Cross Country at Hollesley, as well as football and swimming.

Again the governors have supported the school, and have spent a morning in the school monitoring Collective Worship and Christian Ethos. Eyke School has been pleased to welcome the new vicar, Mandy Reynolds.

ACES (formerly FOES). Mrs Watsham introduced herself as the new chairman of ACES (Active Community of Eyke School). After previous difficulties, ACES has been formed to continue providing support to Eyke School, being outward looking and inclusive, welcoming as many parents and carers as possible. There is a Facebook page, and there will be monthly meetings. Currently the group is waiting for the new bank account to be set up.

Meanwhile, a cinema night has been held for the children, showing *Peter Rabbit* which was attended by 49 children for a £2 charge, which included popcorn and a drink.

On the first Friday of the month there will be a cake stall, discos are planned for May and October, there will be a quiz in September, and the Summer Fair on 29th June.

It is hoped to get a group of parents together to clean up the pond and pond area.

One fund raising idea is *Bag for School* where bags of unwanted clothes can be brought in and then sold to a company by weight.

Eyke Village Hall. (Written report from Mr Fisher). The hall has been in regular use by the Parish Council, the Over 50s Club, the PCC and for various private parties, quiz nights and for yoga and tai chi classes. Various work has been carried out over the year, including boiler servicing, and the removal of the old oil tank. Guttering was replaced in June, and a full electrical survey resulted in the emergency lighting being upgraded, and a light being put in the room housing the boiler, along with repairs to the security light over the main entrance.

Initial figures show a surplus for the year of just over £1000. Thanks as always go to Mervyn Whitmore for keeping the outside of the hall free of weeds and litter. With input from various village organisations, the annual report will be made to the Suffolk Local History Society.

The clerk reported that plans are moving ahead for the hall to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, with the Parish Council as trustee. The solicitor has now submitted the application to the Charity Commission, with a response time of around 8 weeks. He expects there will be queries from them before the Incorporation can take place. Meanwhile, a group of interested people will be getting together on 9th May to start discussions about refurbishment and fund raising.

Recreation Ground. Cllr Whitmore reported that the playground continues to be well used. The doggy bins prove their worth, although there are always those who ignore them.

A number of fly tipping incidents have been noted over the year, as well as campers who have left their rubbish behind them.

The first barrier onto the rec has been struck twice in recent months, once in February which was repaired soon after, and the next in March, which is hopefully being repaired this week.

One of the goalposts was covered with flour and other foodstuffs scattered around. This has now been cleared up.

Vehicle tracks are visible on the pitch, but it is unclear how access is gained.

Cllr Herring: SCDC (East Suffolk Council from 1st April.) Cllr. Herring reported that he had very much enjoyed representing Eyke over the past years, and was pleased that the new East Suffolk Council, taking over from SCDC was inheriting a Council in a sound financial position, and with improved services. The new East Suffolk Council, incorporating Suffolk Coastal and Waveney, will benefit from greater efficiencies and economies of scale, and has led to savings of £22M.

Suffolk Coastal District Council existed from 1974 to 2019, and Cllr. Herring is keen to preserve a record of those years. A booklet *Memories of Suffolk Coastal District Council* has been produced and is available free of charge.

The forthcoming local elections, with new ward boundaries, will move Eyke into the Deben ward.

The area has seen vast changes over this time, with new housing, tourism, and with Felixstowe becoming the second largest port in Europe. The local council has the responsibility for the testing of foodstuffs entering the country, and currently there are seven or eight vets and 50 to 60 other employees responsible for this. Leiston too has seen growth, and more is projected with the building of Sizewell C.

Cllr. Herring acknowledged the concerns of the community over the fate of the *Elephant and Castle* and has been in touch with the planning department. The main concern for any pub is its viability, and the area has had its fair share of closures, but also success stories. A pub cannot be forced to open. It is also clear that much work needs to be done to the building. Any change of use to a private property would have to be evidentially justified that it is not a viable concern.

The clerk then read an email sent to both Eyke Parish Council and Cllr. Herring by Rachel Smith from the planning department. She does not believe that at present there is any breach of planning control. The owner is now living upstairs, leaving the downstairs room free. Photos, yet to be received, will be sent as evidence. The owner indicated that she plans to open as a pub and cafe. The General Permitted Development Order allows the change of use from A4(pub) to A3 (cafe) where the building is not an asset of community value. *(The clerk has pointed out to her that it is registered as an asset of community value.)* If the cafe is ancillary to the pub, change of use may not be required anyway. The outbuildings, which also form part of the listing, appear to have been worked on as well.

It had been hoped that the owner would be at the meeting to give a report, or send one to be read, as agreed by Ms Bailey with the clerk. The clerk had emailed her an agenda, and delivered a hard copy, but had received no response.

The clerk thanked Cllr. Herring for his support over the years through the Enabling Communities Budget for various projects in Eyke, particularly the most recent one of £1000 towards the cost of the deer fencing.

Eyke Millennium Group. Mrs Pooley reported that the past year has been a quiet one for the group, although once the defibrillator was installed, a great deal of time was spent chasing up the Community Heartbeat Trust to arrange a training session in the village, which has just taken place. The group delivered flyers to every house in the village, and were delighted with the effort when more than 50 people attended. Vaughan Preston, the trainer, provided a very informative and entertaining session, and the feedback has been really positive. Hopefully people now will now feel more confident if ever called upon to use the defibrillator.

The group, which consists of about a core of seven people, supported the Christmas Tree Festival in the Church, with their take on recycled decorations, made out of bottle tops, plastic cups and containers, and a significant number of corks from wine bottles, among much else! Again, thanks are due to Swanns, who provided the tree outside the Church. After several years sterling service, the group decided the lights needed to be replaced, and many positive comments were received about the new ones. Thanks are due to the New Year's Eve Committee, whose donation of £100 covered the cost.

The group is now 20 years old, having been started by a small number of people in order to find ways to celebrate the millennium. Having done this, notably with the production of a book about the village, it just kept going, and has organised a few events now and again: pot luck suppers, barbecues, a couple of cricket matches, celebrated special events, such as VE Day, and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, as well as significant birthdays – including the Queen's 90th and Mervyn's 80th.

Members have been lost and gained over the years; new ones, and new ideas are always welcome. Please contact Karen Watson or Jackie Pooley for more information.

Inside Eyke. (*Written report from Mr Marr.*) Mr Marr apologised that no editions have been produced for the past year and assured the meeting that efforts are ongoing to produce future publications of such a worthwhile and high quality magazine. A group met recently, and discussion centred on two aspects of the process: first to establish a firm financial base, and second to try and widen the pool of people who are prepared to contribute to the content of the magazine, or help in other ways, particularly anyone with experience of desktop publishing. Any suggestions would be most gratefully received.

Village Tree Warden. (*Written report from Mrs Clements.*) Prior to 2018 tree wardens nationally were supported by local councils. When this all changed, due to local authorities having to cut funding, Suffolk was taken over by a volunteer group headed by Frances Jannaway. Suffolk is a large county, with Frances living in mid Suffolk, hence it was suggested that East Suffolk form their own group, with Frances retaining overall authority for websites, annual general meetings and meetings with all Suffolk co-ordinators.

Mrs Clements was approached to become a joint co-ordinator with Jane Hawthorne of Ufford and Anne Westover of Wickham Market, and since then they have worked together. East Suffolk is now getting off the ground with some 30 tree wardens on board. The Suffolk AGM will be held at Ufford in April. All this has meant a busy year, attending meetings as well as informative talks and outings into woodlands.

Mrs Clements continued to tend the copse in the recreation ground with help from Cllrs. Stangoe, Cushing and Whitmore. Last summer many of the original saplings received new stakes, ties and protective sleeves, the cost being born by the parish council. A team of parents came from Eyke primary school to assist. Cllr. Whitmore generously helped to re-secure the stakes when they started to lean – woman power did not work that well!

Life became somewhat depressing after this as it became evident that deer were feasting on the new, tender shoots of the saplings. However, the Parish Council kindly agreed to allow the erection of a deer fence. Country Care, a local company, quoted the sum of £2875.00 plus vat to do the work. £600 was donated from Cllr Reid's Locality budget, £1000 from Cllr Herring's Enabling Communities Budget, and £500 from The Tree Council. This was a great help. The fencing was erected and the saplings are now protected. Since then Cllr Cushing and Mrs Clements have planted 2 new hornbeam, 2 red oak and 2 green beech trees while Cllr. Stangoe has planted 2 young oaks and a rowan, all of which she grew from seed.

Repeated requests to Nicholas Newton of East Suffolk Council to put Tree Preservation Orders on the two large oaks in Church Lane have come to nought as he feels they are under no threat. This is very disappointing.

Considerable time has been spent on site clearing grass and weeds around each sapling and generally tidying the area of old plastic and debris. As the new growth comes through it will be easier to see which saplings have actually died and remove them. 2019 is a very promising year.

Parish Council. Cllr. Fleming looked back on the achievements during this term of the council, including the creation of the playground, and the very significant steps taken towards securing the future of the village hall. In recent months councillors had considered the local plan which, if implemented, could see the building of 45 to 65 new homes in the village. Councillors had supported the need for new housing stock, but argued for far fewer than 45.

In four weeks time there will be a new Parish Council. Seven people have been validly nominated, so every seat is filled, and there will be no need for an election.

Thanks go as always to those people who help to keep the village running smoothly, and especially to Mervyn Whitmore, for all he does in and around the village.

Finance. The Parish Council accounts were available for inspection.

In the absence of any other business, the chairman thanked all those who had attended and closed the meeting at 8.20pm.