

The Annual Meeting of Eyke Parish Council was held on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.00pm in Eyke Village Hall.

*Prior to the start of the meeting, Cllr. Fleming gave a tribute to the late Cllr. Whitmore, and his 52 years of service to the parish council and the wider community. A minute's silence was held.*

**Present:** Cllrs. Abu-Hejleh, Clark, Cushing, Fleming, District Cllr. Mallinder (*until 7.20pm*), the clerk and five members of the public.

**Apologies:** Cllr. Thomas.

**Election of Chairman:** Cllr. Fleming was proposed by Cllr. Cushing, seconded by Cllr. Abu-Hejleh and carried unanimously.

**Election of vice-chairman:** Cllr. Thomas, having previously indicated that she was willing to stand, was proposed by Cllr. Fleming, seconded by Cllr. Cushing and carried unanimously.

All councillors present signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office, and completed their Returns of Election Expenses.

They were reminded that they need to go online to complete their Register of Members' Interest within 28 days of the election. The Parish Council is signed up to the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct, under which the Register is completed. The clerk will forward the contact details for Democratic Services to assist councillors who have mislaid their log in details.

**Co-option of Councillor:** The Parish Council will seek to fill the remaining vacancy as soon as possible, and will invite nominations through the June Newsletter, on the website and Facebook.

**Declarations of Interest:** None.

**Minutes:** those of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023, having been previously circulated, were taken as read, agreed and signed as a correct record.

**Matters Arising:**

1. Cllr. Clark mentioned the state of the pavements raised at the end of the last meeting: the clerk explained that various attempts had been made by the parish council and individuals to persuade Highways to deal with this problem, but always received the response that they were not at "intervention level", although the criteria for this is unclear. Residents are advised to use the reporting tool on the SCC website. Cllr raised the matter of a leaking fire hydrant near her property, which no service seems to take responsibility for. Cllr. Mallinder said this is the responsibility of the fire service. Cllr. Abue Hejleh will contact them.

2. Village Hall. Cllr. Clark reported that Phase 2 is nearly at an end. The tombola held at the Coronation Barbecue raised sufficient funds to complete the porch, but funds to complete the rest of the work in Phase 3, including the rear of the hall are dependent on the outcome of the Lottery bid, which was submitted earlier this year.

She put out a plea for volunteers with wheelbarrows to help clear the rubbish at the front of the hall, on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May.

*As Cllr. Mallinder needed to leave to attend another meeting, he spoke briefly to assure those present that he would continue to work hard for the village, although his party had done very badly in the elections, and that East Suffolk Council was likely to be run by a coalition of the Lib Dems and Greens. He was sorry to lose the environment portfolio.*

*Cllr. Fleming congratulated him on his re-election: the Parish Council would look forward to continuing to work with him over the next four years.*

*Cllr. Mallinder then left the meeting.*

3. It was clarified that regarding the issue with children vaping near schools, Cllr. Reid would look into how the outlets selling vaping products were being targeted to prevent sales to young people.

4. Upgrading the bus shelter. Cllr. Cushing reported that although the roof looks reasonable, the rest is in need of significant work, including new sills, posts, backing boards and decorating. It was suggested that Denbury Homes be approached to see if they would fund and carry out the work.

5. Mirror at the top of Creasey's Hill. Suffolk County Council will definitely not allow this, citing dangers which could be caused such as not being able to judge the speed of oncoming traffic, over reliance, vandalism and the danger of broken glass. Cllr. Cushing felt these were spurious arguments, and he had used one with great effect for many years. Mirrors placed on private land would need the landowner's permission, and may need planning permission.

It was agreed that the Parish Council could not support their use, but it was up to individuals to take the responsibility.

6. Response from Chris Bally, Chief Executive at East Suffolk Council, regarding traffic and planning issues. The clerk read his response, and although it in no way addressed the complaints raised, the general feeling was that the reply was an improvement on that made by Stephen Baker, as it suggested an awareness that there were issues over poor relationships between the planning department and the local parishes, which he hoped to address.

7. The Parish Council thanked Mr Hatton for organising the successful litter pick in April, when many bags of rubbish were collected. The issue of large items being dumped was raised, which may well happen as councils charge for their disposal. The clerk will check with Cllr. Mallinder regarding the collection of items dumped in this way.

#### **Other Matters:**

1. Memorial to Cllr. Whitmore. It was agreed that some sort of lasting tribute should be made. The Parish Council can fund this, and can also accept donations from the public to put towards it. It was agreed that a bench, or possibly two, would be fitting, one to be placed on the rec, possibly just outside the play area, and perhaps another in the churchyard.

The clerk will contact Mr Fisher, to publicise this in the next newsletter, and to discuss the possibility of perhaps including an envelope for cash/cheque donations. Online bank payments could also be accepted. It was agreed that the cut off point for donations should be by the next Parish Council meeting. It was also agreed to put a Parish Council tribute in the next newsletter.

2. Recreation Ground. It was agreed to accept a quotation from David Bracey to carry out quarterly inspections of the play area, including an annual inspection, for £400 plus vat per annum. He carries out other inspections in the area, and was recommended by Hollesley and Ufford Parish Councils. The clerk will confirm this with him, to start in June. The clerk reported collecting a small amount of rubbish in the children's play area. Cllr. Cushing is to investigate the cost of providing a litter bin. The clerk will contact East Suffolk to see if they offer a provision and collection service similar to that for doggy bins.

3. Housing Development next to the school. The Parish Council will meet with Robert Eburne from Denbury Homes, next Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> at his request. Before submitting amendments to the planning application, he wishes to discuss the matter with the parish council.

The clerk reported that today she was contacted by the planning officer, who feels it would be beneficial to have a meeting with the school, the parish council and SCC to clarify the car parking requirements for the school and the village. It was agreed that of the dates on offer, Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm is most convenient. This will be attended by Cllrs. Clark and Cushing, and the clerk. The clerk will forward confirmatory details as soon as possible.

The Parish Council clarified to the public present that once the amendments were in the public domain, the public would be invited to a meeting to discuss.

Cllr. Abu-Hejleh expressed concerns about privacy for existing properties if the houses being built closest to their boundary overlooked the property. This was not up for discussion at this point.

She also raised the matter of creating a petition regarding the scale of the development and particularly its traffic impact, which she is prepared to do as an individual if the Parish Council is reluctant.

While the Parish Council agreed that it is important to make the voice of the village heard, councillors felt that it would need to be done on an individual basis, particularly as only four councillors were present to make such a decision.

4. East Suffolk Planning Alliance. Following a groundswell of dissatisfaction about the way planning issues are handled in this part of Suffolk, this alliance was formed, in order to have a stronger voice in raising concerns about planning and associated matters. A meeting of the alliance at Grundisburgh was attended by 33 people from 14 parish councils in the area, including Cllr. Cushing, who spoke of this Parish Council's concern about dealings with East Suffolk, particularly in regard to the development at Bentwaters. The Parish Council has been invited to affiliate, with the clerk receiving information to distribute. There is no official membership as such. It was agreed to affiliate with the group.

5. The Joint Parishes Liaison Group is planning to hold a meeting with Mr Bally concerning traffic impacts and is about to agree dates. Cllr. Cushing will respond to this.

**Finance:**

1. The Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 was put before the council and approved.

2. The Annual Accounting Statement for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 was put before the council and approved.

3. The Certificate of Exemption was put before the council and approved.

4. Mr Fisher, the internal auditor has checked the accounts and found all in order.

4. In reviewing the financial control for safeguarding public money, it was agreed that all remains as before, and existing guidelines are followed. It is hoped that Cllr. Stangoe will continue to check the accounts and reconciliations on a half yearly basis.

5. Current balances: (as at 3.5.23) Community Account: £12726.95; Business Savings: BPA1: £8614.76; BPA2: £118.90

6. Cheques agreed: SALC (annual subscription): £199.23; Information Commissioner (Data Protection): £40.00; Mrs Pooley(Annual phone and stationery expenses) £125.00; Eyke PCC (Donation for grasscutting) £750.00; Eyke Village Hall (donation): £500.00; Eyke Village Hall (Annual hire charge 22/23) £100.00.

Regarding the payments to the village hall, councillors agreed that the village should support the hall, especially in consideration of the huge energy price rises of recent months. They agreed that the charge of £100.00 per annum to cover all hires through the year is reasonable. *Cllr. Clark declared an interest in the discussion regarding the village hall and took no part in this.*

7. Cllr. Thomas was confirmed as the third cheque signatory to replace the late Cllr. Whitmore.

8. The clerk confirmed that SALC has taken on the responsibility for preparing the clerk's salary, from April 2023.

**Dates of meetings for the year ahead:** These were confirmed as the second Monday of every other month. Next meeting: Monday, July 10<sup>th</sup>.

In the absence of any items for information, the meeting closed at 8.30pm.