

St. James South Elmham
Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting
held on 14th May 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Committee Members present: Mr C. Bradley (Chair)
Mrs M. Henry (Clerk)
Mr A, Hadingham, Mr B. Crockford,
Mr R. Hadingham & Mrs A. Dinsdale

9 Residents of the village

1. Welcome.

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting, especially Councillor Judy Cloke the area's County Councillor at Suffolk County Council.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from:- Mr M. Graham, Mrs L. Bradley & Mrs C. Rodbourne.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes had been published on the parish noticeboard, and copies were available to read this evening. Mrs A Dinsdale then read a precis of the minutes.

Acceptance of the minutes, proposed by Mr R. Hadingham, seconded by Mr D. Ritchie, vote unanimous. Signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising

The Chairman commented that following the reference to "a letter to be circulated to all residents" in the previous minutes, he was pleased to report that before this could take place volunteers had offered help to the Church, Village Green and the 'phone box. Whilst this was very pleasing and appreciated, there was still a need for more volunteer assistance in the village.

5. Reports:

Chairman's Report

The on-going waste activities at The Cottage and Laurel Farm had resulted in an enforcement order being issued on 11th January 2023 by Suffolk County Council stating "*Remove from the land all materials, plant, equipment and waste, including any processed materials and materials spread onto the land, associated with the waste transfer facility*". And also reinstate the lands as they were before waste activities began. However, waste activities have continued and even expanded since the enforcement notice. The latest information received from Suffolk County Council is that they have started the prosecution process with a court date set for 3rd June 2024. The advocate for Suffolk County Council has requested supporting statements from those affected in St James, and guidance on how best to provide this, is awaited.

There have been no planning matters.

The Chairman was pleased to report that in January, East Suffolk Council had at last completed the legal transfer of the land now known as The Village Green to the Parish Meeting. Since which time, with a lot of volunteer help and donations in kind, the rubbish mound which potentially contained hazardous waste had been cleared and the area re-seeded with grass. A new length of hedge had been planted, as had a Coronation Oak tree alongside the Jubilee Oak with a bench between them. 5 Crab Apple trees and a village green sign made by Mark Golsworthy. Thanks were extended to all those who had been involved with all this work.

The Chairman then invited short reports from representatives from the Church, Village Hall and Village Orchard.

For the Church, Mr B. Crockford said that there had been little change in the financial position for the church since his last report in November. But the efforts by the volunteers on work in the churchyard had far outweighed expectations and the churchyard was looking extremely neat and tidy, which was most pleasing to see.

For the Village Hall, The Chairman read out a report that he had been given. The Hall's AGM was taking place on 22nd May at 7pm at which plans for the necessary refurbishment of some parts of the

Hall would be discussed. It was hoped that residents would attend and have some input into these discussions. The building now 50 years old is in need of some improvements, and although some help had been given by volunteers, for which the Hall committee were very grateful, there was still a lot more to do that would require funding. In the meantime a community WhatsApp group had been set up to enable residents to ask for help, exchange ideas, offer suggestions or just to generally keep in touch.

For the Orchard, Mrs M. Henry said that the very wet weather during the winter and early spring had delayed some of the work in the orchard as the ground had been far too wet. However, the bonus from this had been some of the most profuse blossom for a long time. The usual early pruning had taken place, and thanks were extended to those who had helped, and the annual maintenance tasks were being undertaken.

6. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) & St James Parish Meeting Account

6a. Accounts

The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024 were presented, and explained by the Chairman. Thanks were extended to Mrs B. Crockford for preparing them.

Adoption of the Accounts:-

proposed by Mr B. Crockford - seconded by Mr A. Hadingham Vote – unanimous
Signed by the Chairman.

6b. Annual Governance & Accountability Return

The Chairman then read out the governance statement which said that like all bodies concerned with local government we are required to demonstrate and confirm we have followed proper governance practices and properly managed our finances. There are particular requirements for Parish Meetings without a Parish Council and an exemption from external audit review in certain circumstances.

Acceptance of the Governance Return by the meeting was required.

proposed by Mr A. Playford seconded by Mr D. Ritchie
and agreed by the meeting and all Committee Members

There had been an internal audit report which had been signed off by the committee's internal auditor.

6c. The Accounting Statement (how money was spent and where) was signed by the Chairman on behalf of the committee and presented to the meeting.

Acceptance proposed by Mr C. Faux seconded by Mr R. Playford, Vote: unanimous.

6d. The Chairman then announced that as a small Parish Meeting, with receipts and payments below £25,000 we may claim exemption from an Assurance Review by the external auditors.

St James Parish Meeting met this criteria.

Acceptance proposed by Mr A, Hadingham seconded by Mr C. Faux and signed by the Chairman .

6e. The Chairman then announced the dates for exercise of Public Rights of inspection of the records. The dates were:- Monday 3rd June 2024 to Friday 12th July 2024. Signed by the Chairman.

Contact either Mrs B. Crockford 01986 782347 or Mr C. Bradley 01986 782582

7. Spending & Donations

Spending and donation amounts were taken from the money raised annually via the Precept.

a) Spending

The Chairman explained that there were certain expenditures that had to happen each year, for example Parish Meeting expenses, Suffolk Association of Local Councils membership, Data Protection fee and insurance. (Although the Parish Meeting were grateful to Drayton Insurance for their sponsorship again this year.)

b) Donations

Although historically the same organisations received donations each year, there was no reason why this should always be the case, or indeed why other organisations could not be added.

The Chairman then invited a proposer for the spending items:-

proposed by Mr A. Hadingham seconded by Mr R. Hadingham Vote unanimous

For the donations it was agreed by the meeting that the Community News should receive £150 Mr R. Hadingham the proposed that the 3 organisations in St James should each receive a £50 uplift in their donation this year. This was seconded by Mr B. Crockford and the vote was unanimous.

Accordingly:- St James Parish Church – would receive - £550
St James & St Nicholas Community Hall - £550
St James Village Orchard - £250

8. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) & St James Infrastructure Programme

The Chairman presented and explained in detail to the meeting what a Community Infrastructure Levy was and how it was raised, and approximately the amount of CIL available to St James. The Committee had debated at great length an infrastructure programme that was needed and suitable for St James before agreeing the proposed programme and presenting it to the organisations in the village for their support. The Village Hall Committee were in total agreement as was The Village Orchard Committee, and both had expressed their willingness to match fund projects. The support of the Meeting was now requested. The Chairman pointed out that the Parish Meeting had also provided support funding up to a specified limit for previous projects and should consider doing so on this occasion as decided by the Committee as the application developed. The programme was explained to and discussed by the Meeting who were wholehearted in their support. Mr A. Hadingham proposed acceptance and was seconded by Mr R. Hadingham. The vote was unanimous. Therefore, the Meeting instructed the Chairman to continue with the application applying for the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The Chairman thanked the meeting for their support.

9. Elections

Parish Meeting Committee Members serve for a period of 6 years. This year there were two members due for re-election. Mr R. Hadingham and Mr B. Crockford, both had expressed their willingness to be re-elected. Mr D. Ritchie proposed that both Mr R. Hadingham and Mr B. Crockford be re-elected – seconded by Mrs L. Faux – vote was unanimous.

Therefore both gentlemen were re-elected for a further 6 years.

10. Any Other Business

Mr A. Hadingham wished to express the thanks of the village to the Chairman for all his diligent and hard work in obtaining the Village Green land and obtaining funding, and also for dealing with the ever-increasing amounts of paperwork. His sentiments were echoed by the Meeting.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to all those who had volunteered helped take care of the village during this past year. Their efforts in improving life in the village and keeping it running were very much appreciated.

He also expressed thanks for the support and help given by the Committee Members, Mrs B. Crockford and Mrs M. Henry.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.50pm

ADDENDUM

Greshaw Green Enclosure Trustees Charity

Mr C. Bradley reminded the meeting of the purpose of the Greshaw Green Trust and how the funds were used. The fund currently stood at approx. £2191.39

One donation had been made during the past 6 months.

The Trustees would welcome any recommendations for people who are thought to be in need.