

# **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF SOUTH WALSHAM**

Held on **Monday 12<sup>st</sup> April 2021 at 7.30pm** using Zoom

In accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 this meeting was held remotely.

Prior to the start of the meeting a minute's silence was held for His Royal Highness the Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and all members of the Parish who had passed since the last meeting.

## **1. ATTENDANCE**

Present: Mr W R Russell (Chair of South Walsham Parish Council) and Miss A Beck (Clerk)  
7 members of the Parish and County Councillor Fran Whymark

Apologies: none

## **2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD 1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2019**

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 signed by the Chair of the Parish Council as a true record.

No Annual Parish Meeting was held in 2020 in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2019**

None

## **4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr Russell stated that it has been a peculiar year, a surreal time of Zoom meetings which always seem so impersonal.

Thanks were given to Cllr Jones for his wise counsel as Vice Chair and to all other Councillors for their continued and valued contributions to the efforts of Council.

As there was no Parish Meeting last year, Cllr Russel asked that he be forgiven if his memory was a little hazy. The Parish Council has a new Clerk, Aileen Beck, who has been in post since August 2019 and has proved invaluable to Council and improved the record keeping and standards of Council activity.

Thanks were also given to the District and County Councillors for their support and help with many issues during this period.

Richard Bond and Paul Randall were thanked for all their hard work around the village.

Sadly noted was the passing of David Pooley, Dick Frosdick, Maurice Durrant and Dick Dewing who all contributed greatly to the care of our village.

The major items of note have been:

Cemetery – drainage and access work now being carried out;

Churchyard – repair and maintenance ongoing thanks to Cllr J Debbage;

Bus Shelters – the one at Pilson Green refurbished, and the one at the Village Green being assessed;

Defibrillators – new cabinet at Pilson Green Pond

Staithe and Slipway – continued efforts by the Broads Authority to “open it up to all” so far thwarted;

Car Park – Broadland District Council now aware that Council are the appointed managing agents.

Thanks to Cllr Jones for opening and closing the carpark when required during the pandemic.

Grass Cutting – changes to the way that the contract is carried out are under way

Village Hall – continued support from Council for the Hall this period has hopefully assisted in its continued viability.

To close, Cllr Russell reported that it had been an interesting and varied period in the chair, which it has been his privilege to have held for five years. He wishes his successors the very best and hoped that they enjoyed the position to the same extent as he had.

## 5. REPORT FROM THE POLICE

PC 1586 Jackie Chambers and PC 388 Steve Clarke sent a report in advance:

Good evening to you all, apologies that we cannot be there “virtually” as yet, but we are working on getting devices that can be used to access Zoom and we will let you know as soon as that happens.

Well this has been a strange time in policing, never did we think we joined the police to make sure people stayed at home and didn't have their friends and family round!

As the lock down eases we are still very much involved in attending calls involving potential Health Order breaches, but we continue to use the 4 E's... Engage, Explain, Encourage before Enforcement.

The crime figures (as sent out on a monthly basis by our Engagement Officer) remain low. This is good to see. I am pleased to see the traffic calming methods you have deployed with the use of the children designed signs. We can see from your SAM data (dated October half term 2020) that there was little spike in speeds in what appears to be the morning commute... is there anymore data to follow this up?

On the 30<sup>th</sup> March the Acle Neighbourhood Policing team set the 3 area priorities as follows:

- Speeding and traffic calming
- ASB in public open spaces
- Drug misuse in public open spaces

The neighbourhood teams, Response Officers and the Special Constabulary will be looking at patrolling the area, paying particular attention to the priorities set out.

If there are any specific enquiries from the AGM please direct them to [AcleSNT@norfolk.police.uk](mailto:AcleSNT@norfolk.police.uk) and we will do our best to answer any questions. Please continue to stay safe.

## 6. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE REPORT

Aileen Beck, the Responsible Financial Officer for South Walsham Parish Council reported that Council's financial year runs 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March each year and that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 has been prepared ready for submission to the Internal Auditor this month. Once audited, the Return and accompanying documents will be made available on the website for perusal by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. A grant of £1,000 was received from Norfolk Community Foundation, £800 of which has been distributed to the Village Hall, St Lawrence Centre, The Marshland Mardler and the Food Bank organized by Acle Parish Council.

The largest single item of expenditure was the refurbishment of the Pilson Green Bus Shelter. It also made a grant of £2,500 to the Village Hall towards the costs of specialised equipment now being used on the Village Green as well as the Recreation Ground.

The cabinet housing the defibrillator at Pilson Green pond has been replaced – maintenance agreements with Community Heartbeat Trust continues for both AED units in the village.

The Parish Council continues its responsibility in the village for the Staithe, Slipway, Kingfisher Lane Car Park, Closed Churchyard, Cemetery, Ponds, Village Green and Community Woodland – it is very busy for a small Council.

The Council ends the financial year with around £17,000 in general reserves.

The precept for 2021/22 has been requested as £20,028 – the tax base reduction to 340 properties in January 2021 resulted in a larger than anticipated rise. However, the Council continues to be careful financially, with a healthy balance to cover unexpected costs.

## 7. REPORT FROM THE JOINT COUNCIL'S BAKER FUND

Cllr Jones reported that it had been a frustrating year due to the pandemic. The churchyard is looking very good, thanks to the working party. He is hoping that the two Councils can continue working together and is very much looking forward to being able to get back to meeting face-to-face. Cllr Jones also gave his thanks to all members and persons connected to the JCBF for all their work throughout the year.

## 8. REPORT FROM THE VILLAGE CHARITIES

Neither Harrold's Charity nor South Walsham Parish Charity have met since October 2019. Since that date, the clerk has circulated applications for funding and has made the grants after the trustees have confirmed their agreement.

Harrold's Charity give grants to young people under 25 years and resident in South Walsham, towards apprenticeships, and school and university costs such as travel and course books. Accounts to 28.02.2020

showed grants made to six young people, totalling £975, and balances carried forward of £4,330. The accounts to 28.02.2021 have not been prepared yet.

South Walsham Parish Charity gives grants to support residents of South Walsham in times of need. The accounts to 31.3.2020 showed one grant of £150 made and balances carried forward of £3,500. The accounts to 31.3.2021 have not been prepared yet.

Applications for grants should be made to the clerk to the trustees, Pauline James. Contact details are on the Charity Commission website.

#### **9. REPORT FROM THE VILLAGE HALL**

Cllr D Debbage, as Chair of South Walsham Village Hall stated that the year ending December 2020 was a challenging one. Covid 19 has had a devastating impact on the hall's income as it has for many other businesses, and income is down around 80% on previous years. However, it has been awarded grants from the government to help with costs. The hall has also taken up the bounce back loan which was introduced by the government to help businesses 'kick start'.

The trustees have replaced the worn-out windows and doors and, during the first lockdown last March, completely refurbished the bar area which had been budgeted for in last year's funds.

With the help of the Parish Council, Football Foundation and Snellings, new machinery was purchased to maintain the sports ground and improve the surface. Prior to the planned restart of the football season on 4th April 2021, we had an unannounced visit from the Norfolk Combined Youth League who were very impressed with the condition of the football pitches.

In conclusion, whilst Covid 19 has closed the hall for the best part of a year and, in line with the current guidelines this remains the case, the hall's finances remain in reasonable condition having built up reserves from previous years.

#### **10. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR FRAN WHYMARK**

Cllr Whymark reported that this last year have been like none other but hopefully we are coming out the other side. As of 8<sup>th</sup> April, 66% of over 16s and 96% of over 50s have been vaccinated.

Pubs, libraries (including Acle, and Wroxham), hairdressers, leisure centres and self-contained accommodation opened today. Blofield and Brundall libraries will open on 19<sup>th</sup> April.

NCC is undertaking major capital investment across the County. £120m building new schools and alternate provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND); £29m in Extra Care Living accommodation with units opening soon in Fakenham and building started at Acle, with planning agreed for another unit in Plumsteads, near Rackheath; £11.5m on supported housing for young adults; £4m on residential units for children; £3m on greenways, footpaths and national and Norfolk Trails and £2m on a new Flooding Taskforce headed by Lord Dannatt. Two new recycling centres have been started with a £2.75m investment in North Norwich (Cromer Rd/NDR) which should open Autumn this year and £1.9m being invested at Ketteringham, South Norfolk.

At Broadland District Council the Housing Options Team undertook a major restructure of the Housing Allocations Policy. The online portal is now open for any residents wishing to register on the Housing Register. The portal is open 24/7 and can be accessed via phone, tablet or computer at <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadlandhomeoptions.org.uk/>

#### **11. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS JUSTINE THOMAS & NIGEL BRENNAN**

None received

#### **12. PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

None

#### **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

The Annual Parish Meeting closed at 19:50 and was followed by April's meeting of South Walsham Parish Council.