

# ALPINGTON WITH YELVERTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Annual Parish Meeting

Meeting on Monday 26 March 2013 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall, Alpington

### MINUTES

**Present :** Jack Taylor (Chairman), Kevin Gotts (Vice Chairman), David Whitehead, Chris Black, John Lain, and Ivan Green

**Also Present:** Linda Gray (Clerk) and 11 members of the public.

1. **Apologies** were received and accepted from Jeremy McNulty, Adrian Gunson and Sue Thomson.
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2012** previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.
3. **Matters Arising** – Bergh Apton waste site Planning permission had been approved.
4. **Chairman's Report by Jack Taylor**

**Acknowledgements of thanks were** extended to Linda Gray, the Parish Clerk, for support and expertise, without which the Parish Council would find it difficult to operate. Thanks to the Councillors who gave up their valuable time to act on behalf of the village residents and who always try to consider the best interests of both villages. John Lain and Chris Black for ongoing maintenance and repairs which otherwise would need to be funded out of the precept. Adrian Gunson, County Councillor, and Suzan Thompson, District Councillor for attending meetings and providing a valuable link to the local councils.

**Planning;** Last year had been dominated by the speculation of more housing with various groups voicing their opinions as to where the minimum of 10 houses could be built for the best. The Parish Council had opted not to support any development but with the prospect of at least 10 new houses the Parish Council may have to change its stance. There is little support for the number of dwellings but the Parish Council were now faced with an application of 4 new houses in Alpington over and above the minimum of 10 in the Local Plan.

**Play Area and Village Hall Playing Field;** The swing seats and chains had been replaced. A small grant had been obtained to offset the cost of replacing the bark and gravel boards around the swings and slide.

**Precept;** Raised by approximately £1.00 per household per year to cover the increasing costs of the Parish Council but allows to maintain our obligations and enhance the pond and play area.

**Village Issues;** many issues still remain such as parking at the school and in particular dog fouling on the Garrick Field where recently a football match was stopped on 3 occasions to clear up dog fouling.

It was anticipated that next year would be dominated by housing and the Local Plan, but in the Parish Councils opinion the village had neither the road network, facilities, or infrastructure to accept new housing; and when built will only lead to more traffic on the inadequate roads, however the villages of Alpington and Yelverton remain a pleasant place to live with various supported activities, little crime and good community spirit.

5. **Police Speed awareness presentation and Wheelie bin sticker scheme.**

**PCSO Suzi Savoury and PC 1461 Paul Phillips attended the meeting.**

Reported crime in the Village for 2012.13 1 criminal damage, 1 burglary and a theft of fencing. With regard to speeding no incidents or road traffic accidents had taken place. The Police officers confirmed they regularly patrolled the village but their patrol area was of considerable size from Martineau Lane to Seething and from the A140 to the river Yare and quite often to the Suffolk border. Speed had been monitored and not highlighted as a problem. Parking at the

school the Police had been present and although had not issued parking tickets on this occasion they had made people aware when parking illegally or as a hazard to others.

Residents were asked to raise any issues with the Police. Concerns regarding parking by the Church making a chicane in the road causing a blind spot on Church Road. But it was agreed this does slow traffic down. Another concern was the lack of a pavement from the Village Hall to the duck pond and residents reported safety issues for pedestrians.

The Officers highlighted the fact parking restrictions were now the responsibility of the County Council and the Police could only act if there was an obstruction to the pavement or access to properties or businesses.

Officers had recently worked with the school on a Road Safety week, with a poster competition and speed gun testing in the area close to the school.

The Officers left the meeting after Jack Taylor thanked them for their attendance.

### **Mike Pursehouse – Community Safety Officer South Norfolk Council**

The cost of installing pavements would be the responsibility of the Parish Council. Installing pavements would cost tens of thousands of pounds and would result in a major increase of the precept. Until the need for speed calming or pavements were proved they would not be installed. Speed initiatives had been launched in rural areas that work closely with the Police. The SAM Speed Activated Machine could be hired for free by a village for two weeks. The machine was set on a tripod and needed volunteers to oversee it. When operating the sign illuminated the speed of the motorist and the data is recorded. Training and equipment were provided free of charge.

Residents questioned why Church Road was 30mph, but this could only be changed by evidence of speeding being an issue and pressure from County and District Councillors and the Community. It was confirmed a 20mph limit could be installed without other traffic calming methods being implemented.

A temporary speed limit could be implemented at busy times but it was agreed this would be very hard to enforce.

The Parking Issue at the school could use a restorative justice approach where residents would be asked to meet with the school to discuss the issues. The team had worked with several schools and found this method to work very well.

Jack Taylor asked for volunteers to work the SAM machine and received 1 confirmed volunteer.

## **6. Local Plan**

### **Sue Thomson, District Councillor, was absent from the meeting but had sent a report Extract from Sue Thomsons report**

“The LDF continues and the Local Plan Steering Group met earlier this year to consider submissions from main Consultees to the draft site specifics, such as Highways, Education, Police, Utilities, etc. Further meetings of this Group are considering the public comments. The draft final document is being prepared for a shorter consultation by the public towards the summer before the submission is sent to the Inspector in late summer, with a public Inquiry anticipated sometime in the autumn.”

## **7. Financial Report by Linda Gray, Parish Clerk**

The bank balance at 1 March 2013 had finished at £4,807.05, £616.25 lower than the previous year and the precept had been increased to £6,687.00, a 3% increase in line with inflation. Bank interest remained low. Section 137 donations were donations from the Parish Council on behalf of the community to non profit making organisations that could potentially benefit the whole community and included the Air Ambulance £100.00. The main cost this year was due to work carried out at the pond, including tree pruning and repairing the bank which totalled £3,336.00. Fortunately grant funding of £2,085.00 had been received and with the reclaimed VAT the total cost to the Council was £695.00.

### **In response to resident questions**

**The Adopter Recycling** scheme provides £250 income per year – Why not more income when quite often overflowing. There was a contract with South Norfolk Council for the PC to keep the area clean and tidy. The amount was not the result of income from recycling the material.

**Play Area** – The nursery get exclusive use and do not pay towards the maintenance of the area.

The Nursery due to Ofsted rules for young children in open spaces have exclusive use of the Play Area for 45 minutes a day during term time Monday to Thursday. Since the sign had been erected there had been only one complaint. Historically the Parish Council had awarded grants to help maintain the Nurseries existence in the Village, thankfully at the present they were doing very well and now had a waiting list. If the Nursery were to close the loss of income to the Village Hall would be devastating.

#### **8. Garrick Field Report by John Lain**

Regular safety checks are conducted of the field and the results discussed at the Parish Council Meetings.

**Annual Inspection** The annual safety report had not highlighted any new areas for attention.

**Dog Fouling** – The problem was increasing even with two dog bins installed at the field. A football match was stopped recently 3 times to deal with dog fouling on the pitch. It was agreed the education of dog owners was required to pick up after their dogs.

**Litter** is collected on a regular basis to keep the field tidy

**Japanese knotweed** was receiving ongoing treatment.

**Football Team** had approved planning permission to erect changing facilities on the field but sadly had been refused funding from the Norfolk Community Fund.

**Poringland Wanderers** junior team had used the small goal mouths during the winter. Due to wear and tear issues a letter and formal hire agreement had been handed to the team. The Parish Council were considering only charging a nominal fee but had not received a response from the club and the junior team had not visited again.

#### **9. Play Area Report by Kevin Gotts**

The Play Area received regular safety checks the results of which were discussed at the Parish Council Meetings. The swings had received replacement parts to bring them in line with safety standards. The bark surface would be replenished this year. A grant for £500 had been granted from Love Norfolk towards the costs.

#### **10. Bulk Oil Buying scheme by Kevin Gotts**

46 households were now in the group. Councillors who had used the scheme talked very favourably of the scheme and most had gained a significant reduction in the cost of heating oil.

#### **11. Pond Report by Jack Taylor**

The pond also received regular safety checks the results of which were discussed at the Parish Council Meetings. The work to prune the trees and repair the bank had been completed. Further work to provide easier access for pushchairs and the disabled was on going. The duck weed in the pond had been present for some time and Jack Taylor had contacted the County Council Ecologist Ed Stocker to visit and carry out some test.

#### **12. County Councillors Report by Adrian Gunson**

**Adrian Gunson was unable to attend the meeting and the Chairman read out his report**

**Footpath** – St Mary's had been refurbished

**50mph A146** – Apply to extend the 50mph speed limit from the Slade to past Hellington Corner.

**Road redressing** – Church Road, Wheel Road and Cherrywood

**Roads for attention** – Dranes Lane and Reeders Lane

**County Council Elections** were coming up in May 2013

**LDF** – Cabinet meeting to review all sites and remove some from the programme.

#### **13. District Councillor Report read by the Clerk**

South Norfolk Council was freezing Council Tax, at a time when household budgets were under greatest pressure and Councils were in a unique position to get the local economy moving by running more efficiently, spending some capital and revenue reserves on projects that boost the economy, improve quality of life and generate income.

South Norfolk were investing in

- new office premises for rent to local businesses
- new Commercial Property to give space for local businesses to set-up and to grow;
- £3m to improve leisure provision and leisure centres by generating more admission fees.
- £1m being spent on new vehicles and bin lorries that are cheaper to run and to reduce the cost of collections
- £85K on new ride-on street sweepers
- £175K is allocated for server software updates so data can be kept secure and staff can work efficiently
- And helping to make the City Deal to transform the economic potential of the Research Park at Colney a success.

South Norfolk were supporting the community by

- no increase of fees or charges but looking for additional volumes in leisure centres, garden waste and commercial property and reduced costs through staff implement efficiency reviews
- Protect families despite changes in Council Tax support this year for example, lone parents who can't work and the disabled.
- Help Parish Councils to freeze their tax by underwriting Council Tax Support changes.
- Ploughing-back surpluses into services for people who need support such as the Community Car Scheme, home handyman services, Affordable Housing Capital Grants, Disabled Facilities Grants and Aids & Adaptations for Saffron's social housing stock and Affordable Housing and Community grants

#### **14. Reports from Local Groups**

##### **Alpington with Yelverton Village Hall**

The committee was planning to repeat the Rainbow Summer Festival over the weekend of 7-8 September 2013 to include a dog show, various stands musical entertainment and a concert in the church. The Quiz and Cuisine Evening would also add to raise funds for the purchase of a new oil tank, tagging for thee and insulation panes for the side of the hall.

##### **History Society – Report by Mary Fewster**

Usual programme of 6 meetings. Talks included Simon Scarrow discussion the Waterloo campaign and the complexities of the background to his novels and John Laycock about Norfolk Buses. Visits had included a history tour of Kirstead Hall, Norwich Cemetary and the walls of Yarmouth. The land owner whose field included the site of Alpington Church had not responded to letters which made research slow.

##### **St Mary's Yelverton – Liz Bloomfield Church Warden**

PCC is made up of eleven members and has the minimal of 6 meetings a year. The accounts were independently reviewed after which donations to up to 11 charities.

There are various subcommittees including fundraising and building workshop.

A big thanks to the team of volunteer builders led by Andrew Morris who had now completed the toilet facilities.

Several events take place during the year including Lent Course, Open Air concert, Picnic to celebrate the Jubilee, Cycle ride, Harvest Festival supper and Carol singing.

The Friends of St Mary's fundraising now included a 100 club that through popularity had been increased to the 200 club and funds would be used towards the roof refurbishment fund.

##### **Carpet Bowl – Report by John Lain**

The club remained very popular and was now in its second year. 30 members had subscribed which included 18-20 regular members. The team had recently visited Surlingham for a friendly competition.

##### **Cottontails Nursery – Report read by Jack Taylor**

The Nursery was now oversubscribed and included a lot of the children from the village and had resulted in another member of staff being appointed. A big thank you to the Parish Council for their work on the Play area and the notice of closure was working well. Due to the hard work of the manager Vicky Hubbard she had received an invitation to attend the Queens Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in June.

##### **Painting Group - Report by Pat Barter**

Meeting on alternate Tuesdays for 2 hours maintains a membership of 12 artists and enjoy an afternoon of water colour painting with like minded people.

### **TWIGS - Report sent by Tricia Gunson**

A thriving ladies group with over 30 members. Meet every first Wednesday in the month for companionship, light refreshment and to hear a speaker, topics have included Corn dollies, raffia hats, the history of Bletchley Park, cooking with venison, cake decoration and life in a London Hotel and a. The walking, craft and scrabble groups meet monthly, and walkers venture all over Norfolk. Events had included the Crab Supper and Summer Lunch, a Black and White Supper, Country and Western Evening and a Christmas Concert with the Salvation Army. Outings included Southwold Theatre and Jarrolds Print Museum. We always welcome visitors including gentlemen and new members.

### **Parish Charities– Report by Doug Ratcliffe**

The Alington and Yelverton Parish Charities Chaired by Rev Knight combine four original local Charities and were initially set up to give coal to the poor and old, or widows of the two parishes. The principle income for the Charities is the annual rent from 3 small areas of farmland totalling some 14 acres. The trustees met as usual before Christmas and agreed 22 gifts of £40 to parishioners of the two villages. If any resident is aware of anyone facing financial difficulties please contact one of the Trustees, Sally Morris, Mike Bett, Peter Knight, Pat Barter and Doug Ratcliffe

### **Women's Keep fit – Report from Joan Garrod**

The group continues to run successfully, although there is always room for more members. Weekly attendances range from 16 to 26. Lunch events are enjoyed throughout the year and particularly at Christmas. Fundraising events help support the Village Hall and the work completed on the village hall is appreciated.

### **Club Cascade –Report from Pat Barter**

A group for the over 55s continues to thrive and has 28 members. Meeting once a month and enjoying a variety of subjects and topics from speakers. There is an annual fund raising coffee morning and an annual outing.

## **15. Parishioners Questions**

### **Local Development Framework – Local Plan**

Residents remained concerned with the outcome of the Plan. The South Norfolk Planning meeting earlier in the day had not mentioned Alington with Yelverton but removed sites in other local villages. The consultation for these changes would run until 23 May 2013. Jack Taylor Chairman had contacted South Norfolk but was unable to find out any further or new information.

## **16. Next Meeting the Parish Council**

Annual General Meeting to be held Monday 13 May 2013

**The meeting closed at 9.20 pm**