

ALPINGTON WITH YELVERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 24 March 2014 at 7.30pm

at the Village Hall, Alington

Present : Kevin Gotts (Vice Chairman), Chris Black, John Lain and Ivan Green

Also Present: Linda Gray (Clerk), Adrian Gunson, County Councillor Sue Thomson, District Councillor and 9 members of the public.

1. **Apologies** were received and accepted from Jack Taylor, Jeremy McNulty, David Whitehead, Rev Peter Knight and Joan Garrod

2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2013** previously circulated. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the following agenda.

4. **Chairman's Report by Jack Taylor read by Kevin Gotts**

Acknowledgements of thanks were extended to all the councillors for the time and support given in the last year especially to the voluntary time given to inspect and repair the areas of responsibility in the village such as the Play Area, Garrick Field and Pond. Thanks were also extended to Adrian Gunson, County Councillor, and Suzan Thompson, District Councillor for attending meetings and providing a valuable link to the local councils. Thanks also went to Linda Gray the Clerk for her work during the year.

This year had been another testing year with many issues. Under the Local Development Framework increased housing had been imposed on the villages by South Norfolk Council. Throughout the Parish Council had been opposed to any further development of the village and at present the outcome remained outstanding.

Solar Farm – A planning application to install a 40 Acre Solar Farm had recently been received for the outskirts of Yelverton and which would impose disruption for residents

Precept – Had been increased for the year 2014/15 by 2%, the overall budget of the Parish Council had not changed but costs had increased and grants withdrawn.

Dog Fouling – Remained a big problem in the village especially on footpaths and the Garrick Field. Signage had been reinstalled but residents still continue to throw bags into gardens and hedgerows.

The Play Area had received further work to replenish the bark and repair the fence and the whole area was looking very good.

5. **Police Report by Joe Pike was not received.**

6. **Financial Report by Linda Gray, Parish Clerk**

The bank balance had finished at £4,138.54, £374.64 lower than the previous year and the precept had been increased to £6,821.00, a 2% increase in line with inflation. Two donations had been received from Poringland Wanderers and the Pre School. 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 Poringland Responders and the Citizen Advice bureau.

7. Garrick Field Report by John Lain

Regular safety checks are conducted of the field and the results discussed at the Parish Council Meetings. Litter is collected on a regular basis to keep the field tidy and the Japanese knotweed had received ongoing treatment and had nearly been eradicated. The annual Safety report had not highlighted any new areas for attention and the insurance company had confirmed an annual Safety report was no longer required. The large dead branch overhanging the Loke had now been removed by the landowner.

8. Play Area Report by Kevin Gotts

The Play Area received regular safety checks the results of which were discussed at the Parish Council Meetings. More work to raise the standard of the play area had been undertaken and included replacing the picket fence and replenishing the bark. The area was now looking very good and continues to be well used by the Parish.

9. Litter Pick by Kevin Gotts

A South Norfolk initiative which provided the volunteers from the village the equipment to undertake an extensive village litter pick. A well supported event which produced several bags of waste. South Norfolk would pay each volunteer group £20.00 for taking part. This had been such a successful event another litter pick would be organised in the future.

10. Bulk Oil buying scheme from Kevin Gotts

The scheme continues to provide a very good discount to all the members and membership was increasing. Savings up to £120.00 per year had been achieved. Residents can register for free and details are available from the Clerk

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 Pond had been covered in Duck Weed throughout the year. Advice from the Norfolk County council pond expert had confirmed that other than applying an expensive killer little could be done to prevent the spread of the plant. However, Duck Weed does provide a good source of food and if the Ducks were not so well fed they would eat it. The boxes installed at the pond were breeding boxes for the ducks.

12. County Councillors Report by Adrian Gunson

Broadband – Phase 4 of the Norfolk scheme would be rolled out in July 2014 and it would take up to 6 months to achieve superfast broadband.

Roads – Both Cherrywood and Framingham Earl Roads had been repaired along with several potholes throughout the villages. The footway between St Mary's and Cherrywood had been resurfaced.

Bus Services – The local service was undertaken by Anglian Buses who were now owned by a major bus company. The bus services was heavily subsidised and had now been rerouted through Poringland finishing at the bus station in Norwich.

Whitlingham Country Park – Had received an award for its provision of high quality water sports.

Hobart High School – Results were consistently high and the school remained in the top 10 of High Schools in Norfolk.

Chet River – The environment agency were undertaking work to repair the South Bank to maintain flood defences and essential double banking had been dug to help stabilise the existing bank.

Council Tax had remained frozen by the County Council but the Police had claimed a 2% increase.

Northern Distributor Road – Work was due to start in a year after the Public Enquiry had been conducted this summer.

A11 – the project to dual the stretch at Elveden was near in completion. The Thickthorn roundabout had been resurfaced.

Solar Farm – Yelverton – Adrian Gunson had supported the views of residents and the Parish Council to oppose the development of the site.

13. District Councillor Report by Suzan Thomson

South Norfolk Council – Council tax had been frozen and after significant savings in the past few years the budget for 14/15 was in a good position. The Council would continue to increase revenue by the growth of leisure facilities and housing stock.

Recycling – A new contract had been agreed and in the future the green bins would be able to take glass and all plastics. Oil and fat could be recycled at the Budgen site in Poringland.

Building Control – after a collaboration of all local District Councils a regional building control centre would be introduced in Long Stratton.

Scrap metal Dealers – the registration process had proved successful.

Local Development Framework – The representations and recommendations from the final consultation would be presented to the Cabinet shortly and the final submissions were expected in late Summer 2014.

Solar Farm – Yelverton – South Norfolk had no policies in place but the application came under the Renewable Energies Policy. The impact on the village needed to be understood. The planning committee would be included in the consultation shortly.

Quidenham Hospice – relocation in Poringland was good

Homelessness – The housing team were working very hard to assist residents and keeping numbers to a minimum.

Solar Farm – The consultation period remained ongoing and the application would be seen by the Planning committee shortly. Questions had been highlighted regarding, CCTV cameras, Highways report, and public rights of way. Residents at the meeting highlighted their concerns with the location of the site close to their house and the constant noise the site would emit. Access to the site via the A146 was a concern and the long term percentage out put of the inverters. The connection to the National Grid continued to be a high concern as it was not evident where the connection would be located in the village. Residents highlighted the inconsistent information given by Lightsource. It was very important that residents continued to write to South Norfolk highlighting their concerns with the scheme.

14. Reports from Local Groups

Alpington Primary School- Report by Mrs T Osbourne, Head Teacher.

The school continues to play a central part in the local community. Maintaining results and pupil number continued to be key areas which were currently consistently good. A WW1 project was undertaken in the Autumn term in line with national events. Dog Fouling close to the school continued to be a problem. The new school hall which had received a 90% grant would be completed by Easter 2015.

St Mary's Church – Liz Bloomfield

The PCC continued with meetings and fund raising events. The toilet facilities were now complete and Bishop Graham had blessed all the work. The lent courses continued.

Bowls Club – John Lain

After 3 years the club continued to thrive with 24 members. The £2.00 per head covered the cost of the hall for 3 hours as well as refreshments. The club enjoys meeting and playing other clubs in the area.

History Society – Report by Chris Black

Interest in the society continues to be healthy, with a membership of 29. A varied programme of meetings in 2014 included some focusing specifically on the village and other meetings were of more general interest including Garden History, the Norwich Shawl and restoration.

Painting Group - Report by Pat Barter

Meeting on alternate Tuesdays for 2 hours, 15 watercolourists enjoy a relatively quiet afternoon painting to different styles and themes and continued to attract members from far and wide.

Parish Charities– Report sent by Doug Ratcliffe

The Alington and Yelverton Parish Charities combine four original local Charities which 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.

Wednesday Fellowship Report by Pat Barter

The group continues to meet every 2nd Wednesday in the month and is open to men and women of any faith had celebrated 25years. Meetings begin with a short time of Christian worship before an invited speaker covers spiritual or secular subjects and concludes with tea and cake. The charity supported by the fellowship is the Vidyal Trust caring for Children and elderly in the poorest communities of India and Sri Lanka. The 25 year celebrations included a high tea with Marcia Jessop the founder member.

15. Parishioners Questions

The Solar farm was discussed extensively with the District Councillor Sue Thomson.

16. Next Meeting the Parish Council

Annual General Meeting to be held Monday 12 May 2014

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm