

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish of Kirby Cane and Ellingham held on Monday, 13th March 2017 in the Memorial Hall, Kirby Cane at 7.30pm

Present:

Parish councillors:

Lawrence Cannard John Cook Lesley Lodge Julie Pickering

Deanna Saunders Mike Wickenden Iain Wright

South Norfolk District Councillor Kay Billig, Norfolk County Councillor Margaret Stone, Jane Love, Clerk to the Parish Council and 13 members of the public, along with guests Debbie Blowers from Bungay Area Community Transport and Sean Aspen from Norfolk County Council

1. Apologies for absence:

Mr Maurice Eldridge

2. Minutes:

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th March 2016 were agreed to be correct, and were signed as by Cllr Cook as Chairman of the Parish Council on behalf of the Meeting.

3. Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council:

Cllr John Cook reported on the activities of the Parish Council in the past year, principal amongst which being fundraising by the Playground Committee which to date had raised nearly £50,000 towards improvements to Ellingham Playing Field. The Parish Council was also involved in many day-to-day activities such as reporting highways issues, ensuring the grass is cut on the playing field, fielding planning applications and the provision of Newgate Allotments. Concern had been raised by residents during the year about cuts to the bus provision to the village, and Cllr Cook reported that following consistent lobbying by the Parish Council, a new bus service was planned for the village, and there would be more details later in the meeting. Cllr Cook told the meeting that at a time when many public authorities were increasing their precepts, this Parish Council had actually reduced the amount requested from South Norfolk Council for 2017/18 and residents should notice a reduction of around 7% on that element of their annual council tax bill. Cllr Cook thanked his fellow councillors and the clerk for their work during the year, and in particular the very active Playground Committee for its fundraising activities. He also asked residents to join councillors for refreshments at the end of the meeting, as the Parish Council had decided to reinstate the practice of holding a dedicated Annual Parish Meeting to give more time for parish business and an opportunity to socialise at the end of the meeting.

5a. Report from Norfolk County Councillor:

County Cllr Margaret Stone reported that in the face of budgetary restrictions Norfolk County Council had taken steps to protect the most vulnerable in society through Children's Services and Adult Social Services, and is still looking to make savings to ensure that all services are maintained and are delivered in the most efficient way possible. She also reported that there were plans to start on the new roundabout on the A146 at Hales within the current financial year, and there would be another roundabout at Loddon near the doctors' surgery due to the building of new homes close to that junction. Cllr Stone's full report would be on the website, along with some information about British Red Cross services for the elderly. Cllr Stone was thanked for her report.

Cllr Stone left the meeting

5b. Report from District Councillor:

District Councillor Kay Billig reported that due to South Norfolk's success in building new homes, particularly affordable homes, the area had benefitted from the New Homes Bonus. However as this was being cut and more savings were required, for the first time in eight years council tax in the district would be rising in 2017/18, amounting to an increase of £5

per year for Band D properties. The council's website had been upgraded, and found that half of all service requests came through the website. Cllr Billig reported that councils had been freed from a lot of restrictions in recent years, enabling them to invest in new areas, such as the New Enterprise Zone near the UEA and, along with other councils, in the A11 corridor and Long Stratton. SNC has also invested in leisure centres, although she did recognise that there was little available to residents in the east of the district. Cllr Billig told the meeting that the area had reached its 44% recycling target and of a pilot project in Broadland to collect food waste. She said that extra money should be available from SNC to fund the 5% of households not covered by Superfast Broadband, but that the technology was not quite in place to help some in broadband black-spots. Cllr Billig was thanked for her report.

4. Report by Parish Council Playground Committee:

Cllrs Lodge, Pickering and Wright reported on the fundraising campaign to improve the playground facilities, which had begun with canvassing the views of the community, and particularly the local children, about what they would like to see at the playing field. Several grants had already been secured from a variety of local charities and organisations and items of equipment installed, including a nest swing, playboat, spring rockers and picnic tables, and a 30-metre zip wire was being installed in the following week. All sponsors were thanked for their generosity and would be featured on a board which would be put up at the playing field, and would also be an opportunity for local business to advertise their services. Future plans were to put in a bicycle shelter which could double as wet weather protection, sensory equipment and picnic tables at the school end of the playing field, aiming to make the area a more sociable space for all ages. Part of the carpark would also be tarmaced. The committee hoped to get all the items installed by the summer and then hold a celebration to thank sponsors and launch the newly-updated facilities. Cllr Cook thanked the committee for their amazing fundraising efforts.

5c. Report from Kirby Cane Charity:

Secretary Iain Wright read out the functions of the Charity and the names of its trustees and told the meeting that gross income for the year was estimated to be £2075 with a total cost of generating funds at £815. Approximately £500 had been distributed to the community at that point with further grants to be made by the end of the financial year. Mr Wright was thanked for his report.

5d. Report from Newgate Allotment Society:

(The Clerk read the Society's report, prepared by Mr Jim Saunders) Mr Saunders reported that generally there had been no problems during the year, with fair results and the only setback being potato blight, which had affected most crops. The weather had been good and hosepipes had not been needed. The site was in good order and the grass being kept under control. Mr Saunders reported that the ride-on mower was now obsolete but had been modified and repaired by one of the members to extend its life and saving the Society a considerable amount of money. Spending had been minimal, funds remained healthy, and all plots had been taken.

5e. Report from Kirby Cane Memorial Hall:

(The Clerk read the Charity's report prepared by Mr Maurice Eldridge) Mr Eldridge reported that several maintenance jobs had been completed including the fitting of new safety grilles to the heaters in the rear hall and a new water boiler for the main kitchen. Outstanding maintenance included re-felting the summer house roof and fitting new floor tiles in the front lobby. Fundraising activities were progressing, including a weekly coffee morning which had started on 1st March, and it was hoped that there would be more support as the weeks went on. Generally the hall appealed for more supporters and committee members, although help was offered by the very active pre-school. Mr Eldridge reported that all the other clubs that use the hall are generally active.

6. Presentation by representatives of Norfolk County Council and Bungay Area Community Transport:

Mr Sean Aspen of Norfolk County Council (NCC) reviewed the recent changes to the bus provision to Kirby Cane & Ellingham and told the meeting that due to competition amongst local bus companies the current situation had evolved because there were too many operators competing for the service that ran south of the Waveney from Beccles to Bungay via Shipmeadow. NCC had approached Bungay Area Community Transport (BACT) to see what could be done to alleviate the situation for the village, and had come up with a new early morning service that would connect with buses to Norwich and help children going to school and college and those wishing to get early appointments at the doctors'. There would also be an extra service in the evening. Mr Aspen said that they were keen to ensure that as many needs were met as possible, and appealed for feedback from residents, although he pointed out it was impossible to please everybody. He suggested that it might be possible to offer a free service initially, to gauge demand, but also stressed that in order to keep the service it would be vital to have adequate passenger numbers, and urged residents to make use of the new service from 24th April 2017, which would be operated by BACT, a local charity.

Debbie Blowers, manager of BACT, also outlined the charity's other services, including community cars and dial-a-ride services, and appealed for those interested in being volunteer drivers to get in touch with her.

Cllr Cook thanked Mr Aspen and Ms Blowers for attending and listening to the community's needs, and he hoped for a positive outcome for the village.

7. Matters raised by residents:

Cllr Cannard pointed out that the barrier outside the school had been damaged.

8. Any other business:

There was none

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.06pm.

Signed..... Dated.....
Chairman