

WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Walpole Parish Council held in the Community Centre on Thursday 2nd of May 2024 from 7.00pm.

Present :

Councillors (members of the public) – Richard Green, Claire James, Heather Smith, Jan Luck, William Brooks, Adrian Eveleigh, Richard Blunt, Andy Bliss, Charlene Campion, David Lawty, Julian Kirk

Chairman – Charles Boston

Clerk – Caroline Boyden

6 members of the Public

1. Welcome from Chairman
2. Apologies – Charlene Campion and Gill Henderson
3. To approve the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on the 10th of May 2023
Proposed Adrian Eveleigh, seconded William Brooks and agreed as a true record of the meeting by those present at that meeting.

4. Chairman's Report:

Unexpected Spending:

a. The cost of materials has risen for everyone, this includes us, and any projects with want to fund. Now directly effects our decision making.

What's New:

- a. Replacement of old playground equipment and the ground has been converted to fibrefall protection.
- b. The new website is now fully operational and more versatile and cheaper to host.
- c. Due to the Parish Hall rebuild our current meeting place is in the Community Centre.

Projects:

a. The Neighbourhood Development Plan – Mr Cotton has stepped down and we thank him for his dedication to the plan. Paul Blandford has taken over as chair of the Steering Group with new members applications.

Responsibilities:

- a. St. Andrews Church yard and boundary – we need to find funds and ways to help with restoring the path.
- b. Grass verge cutting – Borough Council has restricted to 2 cuts a year.
- c. Footpath and local walk maintenance and signage. Member of the public have been helping cutting back the overgrowth to keep the paths open.
- d. Small allotment scheme going well and new plots now available.

Not Responsible – but pass on reports:

- a. New houses built on Walnut Road has had a detrimental effect on the road surface and highways are reluctant to repair until the building work is completed.

- b. Severe flooding at the junction of West Drove North, Walnut and Police Roads. Specific flooding at April Cottage again and Cllr /kirk has been heavily involved in helping to get this resolved.
- c. Various pot hole repairs.
- d. "Christmas Tree Corner" West Drove North , just in our parish but further permanent repair is urgently required.
- e. The Parish Hall committee have met the funding targets for the rebuild.

Future Challenges:

- a. Money in General
- b. Village Crier in need of volunteers for deliveries.
- c. The Parish Council Facebook page has been locked and no longer in use.
- d. Helping supported repeated grants e.g, Walpole St. Peter church yard maintenance.
- f. Expansion of the Walpole sub station re National Grid with power from Grimsby to Walpole. The effect/increase in battery storage and pylons for West Walton and ourselves. Thanks to Mr. J. Whitaker for his work on our behalf. I will be on Radio 4 tomorrow 7.30 and 8.30am talking on this topic.

Improvements:

- a. Communication between the Parish Council and the parishioners – this has been tried and it is difficult, please spread the word.
- b. Understanding planning.

Please report any general issues to the Borough Council or for highways, potholes, footpaths, flooding, trees and hedges, use <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/report-a-problem>
The more reports made, the quicker the issue is actioned.

5. Borough Councillor's Annual Report:

- 1. Cllr Blunt advised that as he is on the planning committee he cannot discuss any local applications but can advise on comments and any calling in of applications to take to committee level e.g. the recent application for St. Andrews Church and, by public demand, the application on Folgate Lane. Both he and Julian Kirk can call in an application. He requested that parishioners do put their own comments on the planning portal.
- 2. Planning Enforcement – any concerns please go to the website to report and copy myself and Julian.
- 3. Local Plan – the consultation has been completed and the process will continue with the inspector.
- 4. Gypsy and Traveller site process going ahead and now under consultation. This is fundamental to the Local Plan.
- 5. Wisbech Incinerator – on hold at the moment as overall capacity in England under consideration.
- 6. National Grid proposals – James Wild has involved all relevant area MP's with underground cables preferred.

Please bring any ideas for the parish to the Parish Council Meetings.

Richard Blunt

6. County Councillor's Annual Report:

Over the last twelve months, I have engaged with Highways, Internal Drainage Board on flooding, Planning, and Environmental Health on behalf of Walpole Parish Council.

- 1. Highways continues to be an ongoing issue with potholes and roads crumbling. I apologise for this but there are just not enough funds to go round. However, a new "pot hole" repair machine has been working in the village.
- 2. Regarding the National Grid, I attended a meeting recently with Liz Truss and she is arranging a meeting with the new Energy Minister at Westminster. It is hoped that a contingent from the villages also attend. It is questionable if this is actually needed.
- 3. Gypsy and Traveller site policy has caused a lot of aggravation with local residents and enforcement measures being lifted.

As always, I am open to calls, messages, and emails 24/7 365 and will respond ASAP.
Kind regards, Julian :7816909870 /Borough Council email address: cll.julian.kirk@west-norfolk.gov.uk
Norfolk County Council email address: julian.kirk.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

7. St. Peters Church Report:

William Brook reported that the average attendance at the church was 25, of which, only 12 are from the Walpoles.

Last year's Craft Fairs were reasonably attended BUT last month's craft fair was not well attended and not sure why? Weather/Money could be a consideration. We were down approximately £1000 on profit. We did experience a few problems the weekend before ethe marked with the roof being blown off and ripped. We even had 40 burgers left – normally we sell out!

We are thinking about doing a few things differently, still early days as to the changes.

8. Community Centre Report – NONE

9. Parish Hall Report:

After a little over 5 years, we have now reached full funding – thanks to everyone who has supported us. We have sold anything and everything from inside the hall to raise extra money, even the stage and the floor!

We had a slight delay in getting the electricity supply sorted out but this is now in hand so demolition can begin in a few weeks.

Completing contracts on grants is a massive job. It's not just being awarded the money, it's the paperwork afterwards. We are currently tying up loose ends of a contract from the lottery, also one of our last grant contracts, and the final agreement contract with the builder then we can fully begin the rebuild.

We will have a better idea of completion date for the new hall once the building contracts are complete.

We obviously want to get our new hall built and reopened asap and have already received a couple of new enquiries for when we return – excellent news.

Gill Henderson

10. Open Forum:

Mr. Bliss, on behalf of Friends of Walpole St. Andrews Church, thanked the Parish Council and Cllr Blunt for their support. An 80th D-Day celebration will be held on the 8th of June. A Portaloo has been purchased and Cllr Blunt thanked for help re planning on this.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and participating.

The meeting closed at 19.41

Signed :

Date :