**Annual Parish Meeting of Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve**

**Held in the Village Hall, at 7pm on THURSDAY 26th MAY 2022**

**Minutes**

Present Parish Council: Cllr. J. Borrett, Cllr. P. Borrett, Cllr. M. Collier, Cllr. P. Forster & Cllr. F. Stennett. Cllr. P. Butler arrived at 7:25pm. Clerk, Vicky Bright.

Also Present: Rebecca Hopfensperger – WSC/SCC.

8 Members of Public were in attendance.

1. Cllr. John Borrett is to preside as Chair of the meeting.
2. **Approve the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 9th May 2019**

**Resolved APM22/05/2.01**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 9th May 2019 were adopted as a true statement and signed by the Chairman (JBo).

***ANNUAL REPORTS***

1. **Report from the Parish Council Chairman (Cllr. John Borrett)**

None.

1. **Report from County and District Councillor, (Cllr. Rebecca Hopfensperger)**

**Suffolk County Council**

***\*See attached Annual Town & Parish Report 2021-22 Appendix 1***

**West Suffolk Council**

**Garden Waste Collection**

The cost of a brown bin £45 per year for 2022

link for signing up on line: [www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/gardenwaste)

**Work on the next local plan for 2024 – 2040**

The next public consultation will commence on the 26th May for eight weeks on the preferred issues and options. Ingham is redesignated as a type A village in the new West Suffolk settlement hierarchy as it lacks the level of services and facilities required for a local service centre this means that the opportunity for allocating small sites in or adjacent to the village could be explored through the local plan. A number of sites have been submitted through the strategic housing and economic land availability assessment for potential inclusion in the local plan It is important to note at this stage these sites have not been selected as preferred sites for development but we are seeking views on them to assist with the next draft of the plan where decisions will be made on which if any sites will be suitable.

**Highlights from West Suffolk 2021-2022**

9 million investment to West Suffolk council zero carbon ambitions by 2030, this to include income generation, greener vehicles and buildings as well as extending its solar rent and roof schemes for business.

1.3 million investment will be made into parks and heritage assets such as Moyse’s Hall and West Stow and maintaining areas like Brandon country park.

Delivered a strong response to COVID-19 meaning quality services were still delivered, the most vulnerable helped and many of our businesses given access to funding and support. We were one of the top councils in the country in this respect helping West Suffolk businesses access around £120 million in grants and business rate relief. Reduced homelessness and the risk of homelessness thanks to a holistic approach that helps people move on, and forward (as well as engendering public support for our approach).

Continued to deliver our successful growth agenda by investing in an incubator building for the manufacturing and engineering sector centre in Bury St Edmunds – only made possible by our forethought, investing in infrastructure and forging partnerships to develop business parks linked to the skills agenda. The EpiCentre in Haverhill celebrated its first birthday in November with more than 20 companies and all its laboratory space taken.

**Town Centre**

Work has continued on the plans with a £8.4 million scheme to redevelop the Post office building with the redevelopment providing retaining the historic Victorian façade and the rear of the building developed into retail with 12 apartments above and the link between market place and the Arc being widened with new shop fronts onto St Andrews Street. This work is due for completion August 2022 with the apartments being currently marketed

**Bury St Edmunds Railway Station**

**New Entrance and Ticket Gateline**

Following the development of the new car park on the north side of the station, Greater Anglia will be creating a new entrance on the north side of the station near the existing car wash waiting area.  This new entrance will be funded by the DfT following the successful award of Access for All funding, which the team played a key role in. Work has in now underway to create the new station entrance.

The latest programme estimates work on site ending in June 2022. This project also includes a reconfigured station lobby with a ticket gateline and two new retail spaces inside the station.  During the building works the ticket office has been relocated to the station forecourt. Greater Anglia will also be installing up to 75 additional cycle parking places at Bury Station as part of a successful Cycle Rail funding scheme, which is also supported by Suffolk County Council.

In addition to the above Greater Anglia are also planning maintenance works to the north wall of the station, with works estimated to take place March 2022 to February 2023. Reduced homelessness and the risk of homelessness thanks to a holistic approach that helps people move on, and forward (as well as engendering public support for our approach).

Continued to lead a countywide project to help children and their families access various events where youngsters could have fun while gaining skills (for example, around cooking and access to food).

Barley Homes successfully building out its first two developments with one now already all sold out and housing new residents.

Maintained our wonderful and important parks which have again received the nationally prestigious green flag awards.

Reduced homelessness and the risk of homelessness thanks to a holistic approach that helps people move on, and forward (as well as engendering public support for our approach) options for them.

**Skills**

**National Apprenticeship Week 2022 (NAW)**

Working closely with HR and Communications colleagues, there have been a number of activities and support provided to celebrate NAW. In addition to activities for our own apprentices, our apprentices have been recorded sharing their experiences in a number of videos, which has been shared with Careers Leads at West Suffolk schools, in addition to being uploaded to the EELGA website. We have also shared our apprenticeships brochure and poster with schools and feedback from schools has been positive.

**Kickstart**

Unfilled Kickstart job vacancies continue to be filled until March this year. The Suffolk Gateway Partnership, of which WSC is a partner, has developed a legacy project. Guidance documents have been produced for businesses on how to support their Kickstarter with their next steps once their placement ends, and for Kickstart participants on what they can do to progress their career.

**Pathways 50+**

Pathways 50+ is a new project funded by the European Social Fund and delivered by Futures in partnership with Norfolk and Suffolk County Council. The project focusses on supporting people aged 50+ back into work through work placements and employability support. Futures are working with SME businesses from Norfolk or Suffolk to create the placements, which will help recruit committed experienced staff who may not respond to traditional recruitment techniques. Officers are working closely with Futures to promote this initiative in West Suffolk.

**Visitor Economy Network Initiative** (VENI)

VENI is an industry collaboration project to help develop skills for the visitor economy and supporting businesses in the sector so that they can better make use of skills provision in the region. VENI will bring educators and SMEs closer together and at the same time create opportunities for young people to develop work-ready skills and participate in, and learn more about, their local visitor economy. It aims to tackle skills deficits in East Anglia and will provide people in, and out of, work with the skills needed to progress in employment in the visitor economy. The project is part-funded by the European Social Fund. It is a really important time in the recovery and renewal of the visitor economy. So, to help inform our colleges and training providers to support a future work-ready workforce, the VENI project is conducting a short survey about recruitment and workplace skills survey link here: HTTPs

**Sport and Physical Activity sector skills plan**

Active Suffolk are in the process of completing and signing off a Sector Skills Plan for the Sport and Physical Activity Sector to help address skills shortages in the Suffolk Sport and Leisure market. Key local issues have been identified, including:

* lack of applicants for apprenticeships that are being offered;
* acute shortage of candidates for all entry-level positions; and
* significant recruitment issues for swimming instructors, swimming assistants, lifeguards, gym instructors, group exercise instructors and entry-level managers.

**Work Well Suffolk** (WWS)

This is a three-year project that is funded by the European Structural Fund (ESF) and managed by Suffolk County Council. We sit on both the Steering Group and the Impact Working Group. The WWS Team have engaged with over 1,350 participants across the county which is 86% of the target to date, this is an excellent number considering the restrictions encountered. There have been 98 Participants that have secured employment through Steadfast Training; 37 have started self-employment/started their own business with the support of Menta; and there are 315 active participants being supported by the coaching service at Realise Futures. Drop-in sessions are now regularly run from Suffolk Libraries and a number of Job Centres across the county, which is proving impactful in these communities.

**Apprenticeships Suffolk** (AS)

Apprenticeships Suffolk have recruited 299 participants to the project, supported 84 SMEs and achieved 35 SME completions to date. This is 100%+ of targets, which is an excellent achievement for a team that started in lockdown. The team are currently promoting the service across the county during national Apprenticeship Week.

**The Youth Pledge for Employer Project** (YPfE)

This is an ESF project which started in June 2021 and aims to create opportunities for 16–24-year-olds by engaging with employers to facilitate a spectrum of opportunities. Over 100 businesses are registered to date. The Virtual Careers Fayre held in December 2021 was a great success and students were linked in across a variety of schools and colleges. The project has engaged with 137 SME’s and placed 25 young people into opportunities.

**Virtual Work Inspiration Suffolk (VWIS)**

The ‘VWIS Discover Your Future’ pilot programme proved to be very successful. The project was delivered by Suffolk County Council, the New Anglia Careers Hub, Enterprise Adviser Network and the Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (NEACO). West Suffolk Council supported delivery by providing a number of members of staff at various sessions. The support of WSC was lauded in a recent article promoted by the East of England Local Government Association.

**Local Skills Report**

NALEP has published its latest Local Skills Report, which identifies the need for skills to be able to meet demand in the growth sectors in Norfolk and Suffolk, which include clean energy, agri-food and ICT/digital. Officers are involved in a number of initiatives mentioned in this report. The report can be accessed here: [https://newanglia.co.uk/skills-advisory-panel](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/H2ikC8JOcyvp7Cnlx_r?domain=newanglia.co.uk/)

1. **Police Service Report/Q&A Session**

No report to present and no Police representative present.

1. **Report from St Martin’s Church (David Yates)**

The church in the village during 2020 - 2021 was closed for periods due to the Covid Pandemics Restrictions. We are pleased to say these have now reinstated completely this year, with the fortnightly Sunday services, alternating with Tuesday services. The Thursday Services at Fornham House were similarly affected, but we have recently agreed with the new manager Dagmara, to start up again in June, as they are popular and appreciated by the residents and staff. At least some of the few weddings previously planned and postponed are taking place, always a joyous occasion.

We were pleased to see the Parish Council at the Remembrance Service, held outside at the War Memorial, and hope this will encourage others to come to this important service in the nation’s heritage, and remember the 15 fallen in the Great War. The two ceramic poppies from the Tower of London exhibition a few years ago, from the families of Cecil and William Feakes, whose names appear on the War Memorial, remain a central focal item in the displays on the day.

Revd Dr Andrew Miller our new Team Rector, with his wife Revd Alison as Team Vicar, since the end of August 2021, form the principal team, with part time Team Vicar Val Gagen at St Georges, for our enlarged Lark Valley and North Bury Benefice Group of 10 parishes. Andrew and Alison live in the Rectory at West Stow and regularly take services here and have now settled in very well. One of his first tasks was to update the church section of the Village Welcome Guide, which with my involvement and local knowledge was able to assist him with this, and is now in place in the latest print run. These continue to be very well received by new residents.

The church, now nearly 700 years old, continues to be well cared for thanks to a small team of cleaners and flower arrangers, with favourable comments often heard by visitors from near and far, but we would always like a few more to lighten the load. We also have a small fabric group who maintain the building and make improvements where feasible, practical and viable, under the strict guidance of the Diocese Authority, whose appointed Architect carries out detailed inspections every 5 years, the next in 2024, and makes recommendations for regular maintenance and repairs.

As part of the Bells and Tower Project, to refurbish and tune the 6 bells, replace the old oak supporting bell frame with a new steel one, install a new upper gallery ringing floor and improve the ground floor servery with running water, sink and storage cupboards; steel lifting beams have been installed above the bells to facilitate their lowering, and the 50 stone steps in the tower have been repaired and made level due to being considerably worn after 600 years use.

£31,009 has now been raised for the Project from fund raising, personal donations and some grants, including Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk Council thanks to Beccy Hopfensperger and Sarah Broughton. £19,960 has been spent on the new steel beams and steps repairs, together with Architects and Engineers fees for preparation of the designs and drawings for the gallery floor and servery. Grant applications are progressing to raise the remainder of the budgeted cost of some £160,000.

The regular Book Sales Coffee and Cakes have started again this year, providing valuable and essential funds for maintenance of the church and churchyard, with new gardener Ian Goldsmith taking over from Sunshine Gardens after 22 years diligent attention, and Ian is maintaining the high standards of cutting the grass and trimming around the church and graves. We also held a quiz with fish and chips in April, which was popular. There will be concert by Yalda Davis, renowned local cellist in May, a Wedding Festival in July, a concert by Tudor Rose Singers in October, and two more Book Sales in September and November, so another busy year and back to normal.

Our Team Administrator, Julie Hooton (NBTLVB@outlook.com 01284 700400) says the Church section of the Parish Council website is out of date. It should be updated with current details, especially our new Team Rector Revd Dr Andrew Miller, and under Diocesan instructions some safeguarding statements. With Vicky Bright off sick, Julie has offered to do this, but needs to be confirmed as a designated administrator ‘on the website, applicable only for the church section of course.

Following advice from the Diocese about remaining graves capacity in the churchyard, I need to formally notify the Parish Council that it will eventually be full, and then declared legally as ‘’CLOSED ‘’ Its future maintenance would then be transferred to the Parish Council. The legal formalities of this process are shown in The Ministry of Justice Guidance Notes on Churchyard Closures. Our PCC would make an application to The Privy Council who would make an Order in Council to close the churchyard for burials, at the request of the Secretary of State for the Environment, under the Burial Act 1853. When granted, our PCC would then serve a written request to the Parish Council to take over churchyard maintenance, under the Local Government Act 1972, typically giving 1-years notice. But don’t worry it’s not full yet.! Currently there are available some 50 full grave coffin plots, and 100 burial of ashes plots. The main body of the churchyard could become completely full in 10 – 15 years, similarly with ashes burials as these are now more frequent. This situation is arising throughout the country, and some Councils are anticipating a need for burials within their parish, by obtaining land for use as a cemetery.

Fornham All Saints did this many years ago.

Our Annual Meeting to elect a Parochial Church Council (PCC) for 2022, meeting 4 times a year, was held on 11 May 2022, and David Yates and Beryl Dykes were re-elected as the current Churchwardens, Judith Eley as Secretary, and we are grateful to Heather Long, Sarah Cooledge, Joan Webb, Sylvia Hilton and Matt Killick forming the rest of the PCC.

Finally grateful thanks to the Parish Council for the annual grant of £500 last year, towards the £2000 cost of the churchyard maintenance of grass cutting, hedge, trees & yews trimming, which maintains the churchyard in very good condition and appearance, and is often commented on such by many visitors, certainly compared to many other churches where funds are just not available.

1. **Report from the Village Hall Committee (Paul Butler)**

The new village hall manager, Lynne Quelch is wonderful.

The hall has undergone some decorating, improvements to the roof, two new windows and new blinds throughout.

Bookings have been down since the pandemic, 2 good grants from Government have helped keep the hall afloat.

1. **Reports from Local Clubs & Societies:**
* **the Gardening Club;**

No report submitted, no representative present.

* **the Ladies Club;**

It was good to once more hold our meetings. We returned in September with a talk on Muntjacs. In October we held our AGM with just one change of committee member. At this meeting we had a talk on the Bury St Edmunds Abbey Millennium celebrations. In November we had a talk on time pieces around the town. December saw our Christmas lunch. January a talk on famous people’s graves in Suffolk, was not as dire as one might think. In March we had a talk about the beaches in Suffolk, by Beach Bonkers! In April a fascinating talk on the history of Lavenham and this month a talk on Peter Beales roses, where members could by some of the plants. We continue to keep going in spite of the growing cost of speakers and I would like to end by thanking the Parish Council for their generous donation.

* **the Toddler Group;**

No report submitted, no representative present.

* **the FAS Computer Club;**

No report submitted, no representative present.

***PUBLIC FORUM:***

A resident raised a concern over the stile over the footpath at the bottom of School Lane being impassable and also not inclusive, the Clerk was asked to approach PROW at SCC to enquire if the stile could be made disabled accessible.

**Meeting Closed at 7:53pm**

**Signed: Date:** 11th May 2023