

HEPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HEPWORTH PAVILION
THURSDAY 16 MAY 2024
7.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Garry Bloomfield (GB) (Chair)
Councillor Marjorie MacPherson (MM)
Councillor Perry Penn (PP)
Councillor Nicholas Bennett (NB)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Osman (Parish Clerk) (AO)

Two members of public were present.

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

It was agreed the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18 May 23 be accepted as a record of that meeting.

2. REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR

GB read his report that had been pre-circulated, copy attached. GB and NB were commended by the public on their work over the year, in particular for their work on the Shepherds Grove planning applications.

3. PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

A copy of the unaudited Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024 had been pre-circulated. AO summarised the significant areas and confirmed these had now been audited, copy attached.

4. VILLAGE REPORTS

- a. Parochial Church Council. Jane presented the PCC report, copy attached.
- b. County Report. GB read out the annual report by County Cllr Spicer, copy attached.
- c. District Report. GB summarised the annual report by District Cllr Bull, copy attached.
- d. Hepworth Pavilion and Recreation Ground. MM reported the following:
 - Still a challenge to secure volunteers to serve on the committee but 5 people came forward at the last AGM.
 - Financial situation has improved over last year.
 - Remain compliant with various legal requirements as a Charity.
 - Potential for several football teams to use the pitch.

- e. Hepworth Charities. The Clerk read out a report from PP on the work of Hepworth Charities, copy attached.
- f. Hepworth2enjoy. Jane indicated that this year's lunch had gone well and consideration was being given for a small charge for future lunches. A number of events are planned over the coming year, including a French evening.
- g. Hepworth Angels. Jane reported that this small group continues to meet to sing for pleasure.
- h. Community Speedwatch. Richard indicated that the team had lost a number of members due to moving away from the area but a new volunteer was currently going through checks to join the small group. As ever, new volunteers are always welcome. Indications from speed data gathered by the team is that the traffic calming measures installed last year had had minimal effect on speeding.
- i. Coffee Mornings. GB read out the Coffee Mornings Group report by Anne and Tamer, copy attached.

5. PUBLIC FORUM

None

The meeting closed at 7.34pm.



Andy Osman
Parish Clerk
22 May 2024

CHAIRMANS REPORT – HEPWORTH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MAY 2024

The last 12 months has seen more stability on the Parish Council, we have the same councillors and clerk as we did this time last year, this has been important especially with all the planning applications that we have seen over the period.

We still have two vacancies for Councillors, so if anyone knows someone who would enjoy the challenge of helping the village by being part of the Council then please ask them to contact the Parish Clerk.

I would like to thank all the councillors for their help this year and to Nick for chairing the meetings that I have not managed to attend. I would like to thank Carol and Joanna for their help and support over the last 12 months, also to Perry for his work as Tree Warden and to the Speed Watch Team for continuing to encourage drivers to keep to the speed limits and to make the village safer. Thanks also to Neel for continuing to produce the Hepworth Herald, and for all the people that distribute it within the village, also to Neel for ensuring both the Speed indicators Devices are working in the village, and that the data is downloaded and reported to us, I believe this also helps to encourage drivers to respect the 30mph limit through the village.

I would like to thank Andy for his help and guidance in his first 12 months of being our Parish Clerk, it certainly has been a busy year with more meetings, and correspondence than most years.

It seems that the majority of our time over the last 12 months has been spent discussing either the Jaynic, or the Equation application, certainly since August at every meeting these applications have been discussed, we have even had extra Parish Council meetings, and an open meeting for residents to discuss the Equation application. Outside the Parish Council meetings councillors have also had discussions about the best way to support the residents' objections to these applications. I must thank Nick and a resident of Hepworth who has helped me put together our reasons for our objection to the Jaynic application, which after the 2nd Development Control Meeting at West Suffolk's Council's offices, the application was refused. This may now go to appeal, or we may see another new planning application from Jaynic. I suspect we may also see the Equation application go to the Development Committee, so it looks like another busy 12 months ahead.

I would like to thank all the residents who have put their comments on the planning portal for both applications, to the residents who spoke at both of the Jaynic Application Development Committee meetings, and for those residents that were in the gallery at both of those meetings who were there supporting the Parish Council.

Another major concern discussed at meetings by residents is the issues with flooding in the village. We know that there were lots of communities affected last Winter but hopefully Hepworth will soon be visited by the Suffolk County Council Floods Team to look at the issues and help to stop properties being affected in the future.

Over the last 12 months we have been involved with the following:

- Quiet Lanes Suffolk Project – with all signs now installed on Church Lane and Clay Lane.
- The Traffic Calming – installed last summer.
- Updating the Village Welcome Pack
- The resurfacing of Bury Weston Lane – still ongoing.

The next 12 months we will be involved with the following:

- Any new Jaynic development on the Industrial Estate
- Application of the Equation development
- To ensure the resurfacing of Bury Weston Lane is completed.
- To see if the installed traffic calming measures have had any effect on the speeding issues. In the summer West Suffolk Highways will install the equipment to collect the data, so that we can compare it prior to when the measures were installed.
- To have a new agreement with the Hepworth Recreation Management Committee when the current lease ends later this year.
- To install a second notice board at Wood Lane so village events etc, can be advertised.

Garry Bloomfield
Chair Hepworth Parish Council

HEPWORTH Parish Council

Annual statement for period ending 31 March 2024

Year 2022/23		Year 2023/24		Variation
Income				
7,561	Precept	7,855		
1,278	Grants	3,351		Increase locality grant for traffic calm
-	Bank interest	29		
-	Misc	-		
172	VAT	-		
443	Sundry	-		
9,454	Total Receipts	11,235		
Expenditure				
2,885	Clerks fees	3,456		Change in clerk 1 Apr 23
440	Expenses	508		
123	Professional fees	90		
408	Insurance	441		
339	Subscriptions	333		
425	Donations / Sect 137	725		Increase in donations
-	Election costs	82		Parish Council elections 2023
226	Village Hall Hire	370		
1,480	Projects	18		No new equipment purchased
28	Training	30		
251	Village Maintainace	4,051		Traffic calming scheme
688	Events	198		No significnat events held
-	Village website	40		New budget line
224	VAT	24		
-	Sundry	-		Transfer to savings account
7,517	Total Payments	10,336		
Bank reconciliation 01.04.23 to 31.03.24				
Balances at 1 April 2023	£	£		
Bank current account	10,270			
Less unrepresented cheques	0			
Bank savings account	0	10,270		
Plus income		11,235		
		21,505		
Less expenditure		-10,336		
BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2024		11,139		
Balance as per bank statement on 31 March 2024				
	Ac No	£	£	
Current Account	Barclays 30469823	4,139		
Savings Account	Barclays 53501957	7,000		
			11,139	
Prepared by	Andy Osman	on	02-Apr-24	

REPORT FROM ST PETER'S CHURCH HEPWORTH

We continue to hold monthly services at St Peter's, on the first Sunday of each month at 9.30am. They alternate between a Holy Communion service and a family service. There are services at other churches around the benefice on the remaining Sundays and a congregation moves between them.

The church is sponsored by King's College Cambridge, who make a donation each year. Last year, we persuaded them to sing Evensong in the Church and the dean of college carried out the service. For those of us who love choral music, it was a real treat and also a pleasure to hear the organ played to the full.

We hosted the Christmas morning service this year, which is always a happy service. We held a Good Friday service which was an hour of reflection, with music.

I want to say a big thank you to Team Hepworth who responded to the call for help to tidy the Churchyard last weekend. Along with other volunteers, they edged paths, cleared weeds and started the task of removing ivy from the church itself and the gravestones. This help makes it so much easier for the small band who usually cut the grass and tidy up.

The village will be glad to hear the church clock striking again after repairs and the fitting of an electric winder, at the cost of about E8,500. You may have noticed something strange about a month ago when the strike developed a mind of its own and struck 17, 20, 24 or even 25 times. This has been fixed!

On a less positive note, there is work needed on the roof. At first it looked as if it could be patched on the south face but now it appears that we will need to do far more extensive work. I have a builder coming to give a second opinion next week but we are looking at a figure in excess of E100,000. Obviously, this will not be raised by coffee mornings and raffles but by application to the many trusts and funds which are available. This is a long process and work will not start any time soon. If anyone has the time and energy to work on the applications, please contact me.

Jane Duffield

ejduffield@gmail.com

ANNUAL REPORT 2024 HEPWORTH

I would like to thank the chairman, members and clerk of the Parish Council for inviting me to attend their meetings over the last year. I am fortunate to be able to work closely with Carol Bull as we try to navigate the different responsibilities of our two councils

The county council has had a challenging year as we meet our statutory responsibilities caring for vulnerable older people, those with disabilities, children, special education and young people. About 79% of our total annual expenditure is on these services which are provided 365 days a year.

This year we have had to make difficult decisions over the level of council tax and we are making some significant savings involving service cuts and reducing staff numbers. Meanwhile we continue to ensure we have adequate budgets for the fire and rescue service, highways, trading standards, the environment and climate change, school support and libraries. The total budget for 2024-25 is an increase of 8.6% to £752.8million.

Since October 2023 the council has had a new contract for highway services with Milestone and we are cautiously pleased with how repairs and resurfacing is progressing.

We are currently consulting on the proposal from Government for a “Devolution Deal” for Suffolk which will bring investment in Suffolk of £480million over the next 30 years. In return for this new money and devolved decision making we will be required to have a directly elected leader of the county council from May 2025.

The biggest concerns I have discussed with your Parish council over the last year are :

- The completion of the traffic calming scheme and speed limit change
- Flooding problems and management of ditches and footpaths
- The problems and delay proceeding with the resurfacing of Weston Lane
- The planning application for Shepherd’s Grove and the A143 by Jaynic
- Street lighting
- With my locality budget and local highways budget I have allocated over £22,000 to Hepworth

In the forthcoming year SCC will review the effect of the traffic calming scheme but it is upsetting and worrying that parish council and residents’ view seems to have been that it has not helped reduce speeding or anti social driving

Joanna Spicer,
County Councillor,

Joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk

DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT 2024

This year has been a very different year from my perspective as there has been a change of administration following the District Council elections in May last year and this has resulted in me no longer being a Cabinet Member and at the heart of things. It is very difficult to take a back seat as it were. Our new Administration is made up of a coalition of Labour and Independent councillors and one Lib Democrat and one Green. A large percentage of these are first time councillors which has had it challenges in relation to their expectations and understanding of the role but working relationships are being developed for both councillors and officers.

I have however retained my seat on the Development Control and Licensing Committees as well as the Grant Working Party although I no longer chair the latter. I am also now on the Environmental and Sustainability Working group.

Development Control is a monthly, generally a full day, commitment plus occasional site visits and masses of reading. One application that has been of great interest locally has been the Jaynic application at Shepherds Grove in Stanton for a vehicle recycling plant. This attracted enormous opposition from Hepworth and many other local villages partly because of the additional traffic pressure on the A143. Against officer recommendation for approval it was rejected at Committee and is now likely to go to appeal.

The Licensing Committee generally meets quarterly and recently reviewed the West Suffolk Council's Hackney Carriage Fares Consultation for 2024 and is also consulting on our Street Trading Policy. In addition to this there are frequent meetings of licensing sub-committees to consider licensing applications which cannot be decided by officers because for example there are objections or where there have been breaches.

The *Grant Working Party* is responsible for the allocation of grants from the Community Chest Funding which the Council establish each year to support community groups, charities and voluntary organisations across West Suffolk. This year the committee considered 96 applications and just over £465,000 has been allocated to a wide variety of organisations to set up projects. These cover such things as: helping to reduce social isolation; supporting victims of sexual abuse and violence; teaching life skills; advice on managing money and tackling debt and support for food banks. We cannot fund all the applications we receive but where organisations are not successful we offer information and support in seeking funding elsewhere.

The purpose of the *Environmental and Sustainability Working Group* is to review the progress that West Suffolk Council has made in delivering its action plan and move to Net Zero and to make recommendations to Cabinet in relation to protecting and enhancing the environment in the future. The reverse vending machines mentioned later are an example of an initiative suggested by this group.

The Council's strategic priorities going forward are now:

- The provision of affordable available decent homes;
- Environment resilience;
- Sustainable growth;
- The development of thriving communities.

To highlight a few of the things that have been achieved in relation to these strategies over the last year I would mention :

Flood Recovery Grant - Like other authorities in Suffolk, and with the assistance of ARP and Suffolk County Council, we have paid 32 of the Government's flood recovery grants to households badly affected by Storm Babet. The grant provided a cash payment of £500 each and an exemption from Council Tax for three months.

Local Plan – We are now at the third consultation stage of the plan prior to it being submitted to the Secretary of State. A planning inspector will then be appointed to hold an examination in public. It has been a long rigorous process but hopefully once adopted will enable us to provide appropriate housing in the appropriate places in the future.

Street Trading Policy - Street Trading covers a wide range of outdoor retail and catering activities undertaken in public streets. It includes flower sellers, ice-cream vendors, fancy goods, souvenir stalls and a variety of hot and cold catering activities such as burger vans. The Council is due to review its street trading licensing policy but before it does, it wants to hear from street traders, businesses, events organisers, town and parish councils, residents and other stakeholders on some of the issues which could potentially be covered and addressed in the new policy. The new policy will be formed with the new strategic priority of sustainable growth in mind.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund – This is a central pillar of the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. West Suffolk Council has been allocated £1,943,467 over three years through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Capital Sports Fund – £14,700 from its UK Shared Prosperity Fund has been allocated by the Council to increase participation and further enhance activity. Grants of between £200 and £1,000 are available to organisations across West Suffolk. Applications are now being processed and successful bidders will be notified shortly.

Environmental Resilience – The council has developed a broad action plan to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2030 and work has already been completed to decarbonise a number of buildings using the £1.4 million secured from the Government's Decarbonisation Fund. It also continues the commitment to the £9 million investment for our Net Zero Emissions by 2030 journey and proposes an additional £2.75 million into the fund which will be utilised to improve the energy efficiency and incorporate renewable energy (electricity and/or heat) into council buildings; electric vehicle fleet (EV) investment to replace small vehicles on fleet with EVs when replacement falls due and expansion of our West Suffolk Solar for Business scheme.

I am pleased to say West Suffolk has become the first council in the country to get behind an initiative to increase recycling and support local businesses. The council has teamed up with Love Newmarket Business Improvement District (BID), The Guineas Shopping Centre, Abbeycroft Leisure, Eastern Education Group, Our Bury St Edmunds BID and Trovr to deliver four reverse vending machines. Trovr reverse vending machines use a smartphone app to incentivise recycling through points-based rewards which can then be spent in local businesses. The goal is to increase recycling rates and reduce litter. The new reverse recycling machines can be found outside The Guineas Shopping Centre, Newmarket Leisure Centre, and West Suffolk College. A fourth machine will be installed in Bury St Edmunds town centre once a site has been secured. This is part of our Strategic Priority for environmental resilience and if successful then more sites will be looked at across West Suffolk.

Grass Cutting Review - The Council owns or is responsible for a significant amount of public open space in the district amounting to over 500 hectares and the service has been facing some

significant, coinciding challenges over recent years hence the need for review. Town and Parish councils were consulted as part of this. As a result of this review a number of changes have been implemented including updating some machinery and employing additional staff.

Finance

All that has been achieved and is planned for the future is the result of prudent and efficient financial management which has enabled us once again to deliver a balanced budget, something many other councils are struggling to achieve. This allows us to maintain our standards of service.

- 4.3 million black and blue household waste bins emptied;
- 2495 determined planning applications;
- 839 food safety inspection carried out;
- 236 West Suffolk households assisted with adaptations to their homes through disabled facilities grants at a cost of £1,879,394.

The budget for 2004/2005 includes:

- Local Council Tax Support Scheme continuing with a maximum reduction of 100%;
- The introduction in 2025 of a second home premium in relation to council tax;
- Changes to the long term empty property premium on council tax.

On a less positive note very soon into the new administration a decision was taken to not progress the Western Way Hub development which would have provided among other things a new swimming pool to replace the existing one which is in urgent need of significant renovation being over 40 years old. At the present time we do not have a time schedule for when this will be carried out or how long it will take. Additionally the Bury St Edmunds Archives which SCC had agreed to move to the hub as its present building is no longer viable is now in need of a new home and may be relocated to Ipswich.

I cannot finish this report without mentioning West Stow Anglo- Saxon village which is run by the council. The council recently organised a tour of the village for representatives from the American Air bases and members of the council. I had not been there for many, many years and did not realise how it has been developed by the Council and what it now has to offer and moreover what an important archaeological site it is. So much so that it receives significant outside funding for various projects it undertakes. As well as the reconstructed houses in the village there is an excellent museum, a lovely coffee shop and wonderful walking opportunities with or without a dog. They hold regular events there and host tours for schools. I would urge you all to pay it a visit one day and get involved - they are always looking for volunteers.

Finally, may I thank all members of the Parish council for all the work they do on behalf of the village and its residents and remind you that my Locality Budget is now open for this year!

Carol Bull

Barningham Ward Councillor

30/04/2024

HEPWORTH CHARITIES

Hepworth Charities continue to do good work giving moneys raised from rent of lands owned to the Church and people meeting certain criteria living in Hepworth.

We have had several meetings over the year discussing the new lease for the land adjacent to the A 143 (near the old Allans Garage and cafe for those who can remember it?)

This has now been successfully done, giving a Hepworth farmer the opportunity to farm it and hopefully make some income from it, as the advertisement in the Hepworth Herald drew no interest.

Special thanks' should be awarded to Marjorie, Linda and all who work tirelessly in order to benefit the recipients of which these charities caters for.

Perry Penn

DRAFT

REPORT FOR HEPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL ACM 2024

Please accept our apologies for not attending the above, but on behalf of the village "Coffee Morning" we would like to report the following.

Over the last year we have celebrated special events such as Christmas with all the lovely treats for this time of the year, Easter with hot cross buns etc, an 80th birthday with cake but not too many candles and even a "cream tea" event one morning.

Our "Coffee Mornings" are held on the 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month and we have regular ladies and gentlemen attending. Our numbers have increased very slightly over the last year which is very nice with new people moving to the village. For a small donation we all enjoy a cup of coffee/tea with refreshments, some even home made, but most of all it is relaxing morning enjoyed with new & old friends for a chat

Everyone is welcome - should you know of anyone who would appreciate a break from the home, please let them know about our small group. We meet at the hall from 10.30am — 12.00 noon, and it has been known if someone is having problems with transport lifts has been arranged*

Anne Flint & Tamar Haddock.