

Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on April 6th 2024 at Mundford Cricket Club (subject to confirmation)

Those present: Cllrs J Musgrove (Chairman), C Pryke (Vice- Chair), S Eyres, M Locke and 3 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence

District Cllr Sherwood, County Cllr Eagle and Cllrs Casson, Morris and Stubley.

2. To ratify the minutes

To minutes were signed on May 11th 2023 as a true record of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 6th April 2023 and the Chairman signed them again.

3. Chairman's report

During the year we have welcomed three new Councillors which swelled our numbers to seven but we still currently have two further vacancies on the Parish Council. If anyone here is thinking of becoming a Councillor then please get involved in looking after your village. We also welcomed a new vicar, Michael Chesher, to the Parish Church who is settling in to his new role.

I would like to start by thanking all Councillors for their support during the year.

My sincere thanks also to Louise Morris our clerk. The job of chairman would be impossible without the clerk's continued support and guidance.

District Councillor Ian Sherwood has taken over from District Councillor Mike Nairn and we thank him for his continued support over the year. Our thanks also to County Councillor Fabian Eagle for his continued assistance during the year.

Our Christmas Tree switch on continued to be a success in 2023 with an attendance of between 275 and 300 people. The Parish Council continued with having three smaller trees rather than the one larger one. This made transportation, positioning and decorating much easier than when we had one large tree. It also proved to be better financially. We received £155 in donations towards the cost of the trees from a member of the village and the Bowls Club. We purchased the white fencing to surround the trees whilst they had decorations on. This seems to have been a great success, commented on throughout the village. Many thanks to the supporters in 2023 for their efforts and donations to various charities totalling £583. Many thanks to the supporters who assisted with the trees etc on the day and in early January.

The Mundford Parish Council made a collective award to the members of the Circle of Friends for their fund raising in the village over the years. Their efforts will be missed by the village.

The Scarecrow competition was again a great success with the main prize being a family ticket to local petting farm. The Mundford Messenger continues to be much appreciated in the village. I would like to thank the team behind the production and delivery of the magazine for doing a great job.

Earlier in the year the Council removed the Flexi-bus service which caused some distress in the village with the regular users. The Parish Council lobbied Liz Truss, Councillor Fabian Eagle and Ian Sherwood and eventually additional stops were added to the Flexi-Bus+ service.

Once again, our village looked a picture with all its floral displays. We added focal point Cordylines in each of the planters and the Jubilee bed last year which were very impressive and continued to give a visual display long after the begonias had finished. Thanks to our handyman for carrying out the planting. Again, the councillors and our friends in the village turned out to plant more bulbs in October. We have purchased and fitted a metal tree surround for the Jubilee tree in place of the temporary one. The Parish Council continue to maintain certain parts of the grass area around the village. We intend adopting the NO MOW MAY approach in line with many other authorities.

The allotments continue to go from strength to strength. The additional allotments have been a great success. Work has continued on the allotment hut (previously the Scout Hut) with some further gutters and an additional water tank provided to maximise the amount of collected rain water for the use of the allotment holders. Our thanks to Paul Hubbard for donating an additional water tank and to Clayland for donating the concrete blocks for the tank to stand on, for which the Parish Council donated £30 to Bone Cancer Research. We also had three trees removed from the rear of the allotments as there were concerns due to their condition.

Signed by the Chairman _____ on May 2nd 2024

The Parish Council continues to support the Church grounds maintenance wherever possible. We have now replaced the fence onto Wissey View opening up the view from both sides. We have made donations during the year to the Air Ambulance and the Brandon and Thetford Citizens Advice Bureaus.

The memorial is still requiring some attention to the vertical section of Portland Stone. This should be carried out this year. We will be looking into applying for a grant towards the cost.

Following months of the Clerk chasing, we eventually have a footpath finger- post outside the Bowls Club for the west end of Pig Sty Lane.

The flag pole at the memorial has required some replacement parts this year but continues to be appreciated by many who see the flag as they enter the village.

Our thanks once again to the Fish Bar proprietor for his continued support in providing the electricity for the heated defib box free of charge.

The Parish Council has committed to support the supply of consumables for the Bowls Club and Football Club defibrillators on an alternating annual basis. We have also agreed two grants to the Village Hall. One towards the new playground equipment and one towards the new fence to St Leonards Street pavement. These will be as and when the work progresses.

I would like to thank our band of litter pickers who meet every six weeks or so on Wednesdays, weather permitting. We added an occasional Saturday Litter pick this year for those who could not attend the litter picks during working hours on week days. This proved successful as we had members of the village and children who we had not seen previously.

There was no Stanta Tour in 2023 but it is hoped this may be going ahead in August 2024.

Our thanks to the village church for accommodating our water tank and trailer for the flower beds during the winter months in their lock up with their mowers etc.

A quick note about finances. Our precept for the year was £36,500. The current balance of our accounts is £33,824.23. Confirmation of 2024/2025 Precept received this week for £38,325.00.

As noted previously our costs related to energy for the office and the street lighting in the village has increased considerably. We continue to finance the Community Car Scheme in conjunction with Breckland Council. Our thanks to Ann Shepherd for her hard work in scheduling the drivers every week.

As a Parish Council we try to be fair in all our support for local organisations whilst continuing with our responsibility to maintain street lighting, grass cutting, maintaining flower beds and general maintenance of the Council owned items around the village. Our monthly finances and bank balances are displayed on the Parish Notice board outside the shop and on our website every month following the Parish Meetings.

I would just like to make a few additional thank you's

To everyone in the village who helps however small it is much appreciated.

The Cricket Club, Bowls Club and Village Hall for the use of the facilities for our meetings.

And once again to the Clerk for her endeavours throughout the year.

Please note any items brought up by members of the public at this Annual Parish Meeting will be dealt with by the new Councillors at the first meeting on the 2nd May 2024.

Thank you all for joining us tonight.

4.Open Forum

A member of the public thanked the Parish council for continuing to plant the daffodils around the village, commenting on how beautiful they look.

The meeting closed at 7.22pm.

Signed by the Chairman _____ on May 2nd 2024