

AILSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

ON MONDAY 15th APRIL 2024 AT 7.30PM

Held at the Village Hall, Castor

Present were **Councillors** Dr M Ellershaw, Mr Sean Langston Jones, Mr Richard Moon, Mrs A Perkins (Chairman), Mrs J Pickett (Vice Chairman) and **Clerk** Miss J Rice

Members of the public: 16 residents including 2 Castor Parish Councillors, Neil Boyce and Terry Young

Apologies were received from Cllr M Stalley.

1) Minutes of the last meeting in April 2023, to be signed as a true record.

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

2) To receive and note the Ward Councillor's report.

There was no Ward Councillor present or report submitted.

3) To receive and note updates from village organisations;

- a) **Bus service group** – The representative gave a summary of how the re-introduction of bus service was fought for (especially to include Stamford) and made possible with individual's hard work, especially from Wittering. It is anticipated to start in July with 6 buses initially and more will be known after a meeting on 26/4/24. The Chairman expressed gratitude to the group on behalf of everyone and urged its success by resident use.
- b) **Preschool** – The representative thanked the Parish Council for the amenities provided and used by the children, like the play park, recreation ground, tree planting and wild area, which create an alternative way for development. They explained the current need for more resources. It was suggested that second hand equipment was requested from villagers. They will do this and also welcome any donations made.
- c) **Events and celebrations group** – The representative explained how busy they had become since the Coronation event that made a profit that could be used for other events and thanked the Parish Council for their support. Another successful event was the Xmas tree party and involvement in the K900, especially the 6/7/24 day this year with Saxon Sports Day and workshops.
- d) **K900 event** – The representative continued the information about the K900 anniversary community event and wanted to stress the importance of the community emphasis of the historical building celebration event, (rather than just the worship side of the church building) and summarised some of the goings on such as beacon lighting, quiz, talks, Saxon, Norman and Viking fighting, plus merchandise to sell too. They explained that the festival committee were welcome of the pause in their annual responsibilities for a review and rethink of ideas and format. They stressed also that the profits will be shared between village organisations.
- e) **PECT – Peterborough Environment City Trust** (Village tree and wildflower nursery organisers) The representative explained the objectives and work of PECT around the area and the benefits of the tree and wildflower nursery, that has been agreed by the Parish Council by leasing their land known as New Close field. The

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

trees and flowers act as pollinators and create micro meadows to increase bio-diversity and benefit wildlife and the environment. A resident asked why this field and why it is being dug up as it is a good, much needed field for (local) horses and hedges now. A Councillor from the Parish Land Management Group gave a summary of the decision-making process later on.

- f) **63rd Peterborough Scouts Group** – The representative gave a summary of the activities and ages of children that the group supports, including Duke Of Edinburgh groups and summer residentials. They thanked the Parish Council for their previous donations and said that new and different resources are always being requested by the leaders.
- g) **Good Neighbours Scheme** – The representative explained the crisis in adult social care that presented the case for the new scheme and gave a breakdown of the numbers of people that the scheme/charity has helped, including 139 locally over the last 4 years and there are 100 volunteers, 11 local. They have sourced funding for the next 3 years (they have 3 members of staff now) whilst the scheme grows and is recognised further afield
- h) **Castor and Ailsworth Tennis Club** – The representative explained the need for the club to update and develop and plans for a move (to Woodlands) were started 7y ago. It is slow process and recently a Defra negative bio-diversity charge has been requested of 170k. They were looking for support to offset this by the positive diversity actions and impacts that the village is involved in. N Boyce explained he could offer help via the Net Gain Officer at the PCC.

4) To receive and note the Parish Council Chairman's annual report, including an end of year finance report.

See attached reports below.

Chairman's report for 2023/2024

Welcome!

Delighted to see so many folk here taking an interest.

We only have a short time today but currently planning another social / consultation event as the one we had in October to open the new park was so successful

I would like to thank my fellow councillors for without them Ailsworth Parish Council (APC) would not exist. As volunteers, it is sometimes a thankless task, with both visible and less visible tasks. In particular thanks go to Michael Samways who resigned at the end of December due to family commitments. His calm, positive approach to issues is missed as well as his knowledge of planning and other issues. This of course leaves us with a vacancy.

Councillors attend meetings, carry out research, make suggestions communicate with each other and do many D I Y tasks within the village. To try and make good use of time and share duties we have working parties who then report back to main meetings.

The Parish Land Management Group meet regularly looking at village land noting the wishes of villagers and making the best use of the land we have from that information.

The nature recovery group, in the rec have planted a great display of wild flowers, apple trees and bulbs. Work has been done with pupils from Castor School, and a water harvester has been built and is in use. The funds for this were from PECT and it was built by volunteers.

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

For both these groups there is considerable liaison between Nene Park Trust, The John Clare Countryside Organisation, The Langdyke Trust, PECT other parish councils and local folk with expertise and knowledge to whom we are grateful.

I must also thank village volunteers who have been on those individual working groups especially trying to find ways of keeping the chapel available as a village asset – without whom it would have been difficult.

Need to note our thanks also to Sue Magill for her amazing work in bringing a bus back to the village and we look forward to its return in August.

Also, thanks to Jenny the clerk who keeps an eye and encourages what we do nudges us re dates, is the Responsible Financial Officer and obviously does all the work of a clerk extremely well, on a number of occasions I have personally been grateful for her ear and advice.

When I looked back and reflected on all we have done in the last year I am impressed! The play park has been the most significant probably with new equipment. More has been discussed for the future. We are grateful to Augean for their sponsorship / grant.

APC has now taken on responsibility for the defibrillator and one of us checks it monthly as well as our regular checks of all our assets.

Councillors worked together to showcase our village achievements and aspirations with a display at the village festival and look forward to an even better one this year.

We are now liaising with interested parties to help the progress of the village shop, receive regular information and support the climate action group as well reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan regularly through the guidance of John Hodder. We meet on a regular basis with Castor Parish Council and often share concerns and issues - recent Police surgery being a good example.

A councillor is an active member of Protect Rural Peterborough and has prepared responses and guided APC through the Peterborough Local Plan - we have discussed these issues and we are grateful for the guidance and knowledge of that councillor.

If you have any questions, we have time available now but please do ask them via the clerk or visit a meeting in future too.

Anne Perkins, Chairman

5) To receive and note other Parish Council working groups' reports, including the Nature Recovery Group and the Parish Land Management Group.

Nature Recovery Group – Cllr Stalley had prepared a summary of activity by the NRG and it was read out by the Chairman, as follows;

Commenced by residents with Ailsworth Parish Council Support. (APC)
All actions by combination of residents and Parish Councillors, agreed by full council.
Trees planted by volunteers and Castor Primary and Pre-school Nov 2021.

Active tree watering ongoing via social media call outs in each summer since. Circa 90% of trees survived since planting.

Wild- flower seeding in Autumn 2021. Turf stripping and creation of beetle bank 'sofas.

Additional Planting each year to supplement.

Engagement with Mowing company to create interesting paths and patches.

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

Owl box situated. Barn owl not in residence yet. Annual survey undertaken by the Barn owl conservation network.

Tree health monitored each year via professional arborist for safety and advice. Potential tree work required on mature trees in next 12 months.

New benches situated to enable appreciation of biodiversity created.

2023/2024

A splendid display of wildflowers in its second year, + additional planting.

Name plates added to trees to identify type and which school year group planted.

Planting of 7 apple trees for our King Charles Orchard

Hundreds of bulbs planted around the base of the trees. Working parties to clear and plant.

Water Harvester installed together with Bird boxes, bug box and Pyracanthas plants.

Created by volunteers and paid for entirely by (Grant £1000) Peterborough Environmental City Trust (PECT). Circa 2000 litres of water now available for watering duties.

Hedgerows actively left to grow this year. I.e. not trimmed (and thus also saving £500)

John Clare Countryside Trust & Nene Park Trust worked together with us and other local Parish Councils sharing ideas and resources. Nene Park Trust cut our wildflower meadow for free.

Possible / Potential New Ideas for 2024.

Hedge Management / shaping / additional planting to re invigorate and encourage birds.

Potential new trees to integrate / replace established trees showing deterioration.

Bug hotels, Bumblebee nests.

Information Board/s

Additional APC Land parcels in current discussion for Biodiversity net gain.

Cllr Martin Stalley

Parish Land Management Group

Cllr Ellershaw gave an update on the Parish Land Management Group's work and proposals put forward to the Parish Council, using objective decision making about how parish land can be used, taking account of the priorities identified by the community and taking account of council policies such as the climate change policy. The recent decision for the lease of New Close field to PECT for a tree and wildflower nursery was also summarised and also the options being looked at and considered for the future of the 16 Acre Station Road field.

6) To receive comments from residents of the village on any matters of concern.

A resident raised the issue of litter picking and how a group had been doing a section of the A47 and Sutton to Ailsworth laybys etc. They wondered if a villages' monthly "womble" group could be set up to continue the good work. It was agreed to add this to the next joint Parish Councils meeting agenda in June for further discussion and action. The Chairman expressed thanks to the group for the very valuable work they have done.

Another resident raised the issue of plans for rental of Station Road field allotment in the future, as the loss of available fields is keenly felt amongst resident horse owners. A Councillor stated that no decision has been made and discussions were continuing on options. They said a

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

proposal could be sent to the clerk for consideration by the Land Management Group and Parish Council.

A question was asked of preschool whether they were looking at extending their timetable to suit the needs of parents and the representative said that are looking at this for the future.

FINANCE REPORT TO MARCH 2024

PAYMENTS 2023 24

Heading	LY spend to	Budget 2023/24	Total spend	% of total	Comments
Burial Fees	1989.52	1544	1558.44	101%	
Tree Work	250	1000	400	40%	Small amount of tree works needed
Hedge cutting	480	500	0	0%	Hedge left for a year
Ground Work	2929.5	3000	3603.32	120%	
Grass cutting NRP		700	0	0%	Done by volunteers
Insurance	404.38	410	539.21	132%	Extra play equipment and rise in costs
Memberships	378.28	650	383.64	59%	No Good Neighbour Scheme subs TY
Audit Fees	150	450	150	33%	No external audit needed
Clerk's Salary/PAYE	4881.94	4750	4729.36	100%	
web costs	143.34	300	324.54	108%	
Home/office cost	312	312	312	100%	
Computer	124.98	100	0	0%	
Stat/post/calls/bank	192.07	250	165.47	66%	
clerk training	60	100	0	0%	
Councillor training	150	200	90	45%	Less training completed
Personal expenses	171.9	200	156.15	78%	
Water	288.42	300	248.21	83%	
Room hire	231.6	220	300	136%	Hire cost increase
Bus shelter/wreath	233.99	250	250	100%	
Donations incl GNS	2200	1800	1800	100%	
NRG maintenance		300	294.89	98%	
Maintenance inc defib	608.12	250	858.05	343%	Defibrillator taken on, battery needed, new plaq
1st total	16180.04	17586	16180.28	92%	
Extra projects		Budget	Total cum	% total	
Stone wall	C/F 8k				
Village hall	C/F 1k				
Hedge	Did LY	2000			Done last year, less cost
Highways		2000			No more measures in the end
Play equip	14000 C/F	0	4997.4		
Water harvester	1000 C/F	0	974.8		
Payments not in budget from reserves/grant			53740.57		play equipment (from grant/reserves)
2nd total		4000	59712.77	1493%	play equipment costs £57021
Final Total payments	0	21586	75893.05	352%	
Excluding play equipment		21586	18872	87%	

Signed by Chairman _____ Date _____

RECEIPTS	Last year's Income to 31.3.23	Income Forecast 23/24	Income Cum	% of total	
Precept	13809	14381	14381	100%	
Bank interest	270.45	200	458.89	229%	Higher interest rates
VAT reclaim	1183.27	1063	977.72	92%	
Allotments	388.2	388	417.44	108%	
New close	300	300	150	50%	Given up tenancy in September
Donkey paddock	120	120	120	100%	
Station rd field	567	1134	1134	100%	
Sub total	16637.92	17586	17639.05	100%	
Payment for cabinet	20		0		
Grant for harvester	1000		0		
Augean grant			32518		
Cil monies			19578.58		
Total income	34295.84	35172	69735.63	198%	

Points to note

Basic budget under budget at 92% spent - see comments above

Projects budget affected by new play equipment project - £57021 spent, grant received of £32518 and £14000 reserves

Overall, budget 87% spent and differences will flow to bank balance and reserves.

Bank balance at end of March is £27886, however this includes £19578 CIL monies and excludes vat reclaim of 8.5k due

Earmarked reserves are £19.5k (CIL for the community) and general reserves of £8308, approx 100% of the precept amount

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