

St James South Elmham
Minutes of the Parish Meeting to set the Precept
held on 16th November 2021 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Committee Members Present: Mr C. Bradley (Chairman)
Mrs M. Henry (Clerk)
Mr A. Hadingham Mr R. Hadingham
Mr B. Crockford & Mrs K. Hinsley

and 9 residents of the village.

1. The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting, especially those attending for the first time, briefly explained the nature of a Parish Meeting, and that there are two public meetings a year, the Precept in the autumn, and the AGM in the spring.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs A. Dinsdale, Mrs L. Bradley, Mrs C. Rodbourne and Mr E. Hadingham

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the previous Meeting of 1st June 2021 were summarised by Mrs M. Henry
Proposed by Mr A. Hadingham Seconded by Mr B. Crockford - Vote unanimous.
Signed as a true record by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising that would not be covered later in the meeting.

5. Reports

Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that following the resignation of Mrs J. Chappell who had moved away from the area, the committee felt that it would benefit from additional representation from the village and had duly co-opted Mrs K. Hinsley.

One outline Planning Application for White Willow Barn had been submitted to East Suffolk Council. The committee had responded on behalf of the village. There had also been individual responses from residents. East Suffolk Council had subsequently refused to grant permission. All the paperwork can be viewed on line.

The Chairman brought the meeting up to date with the waste operation activities [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Suffolk County Council had issued enforcement notices on both sites, which had been appealed. A meeting between those residents most affected by the continued waste operation was held. Breaches of the enforcement notices were collected and submitted to the Government Planning Inspectorate. There was a huge volume of comment and evidence from the village and SCC asking for rejection of the appeals. A date for the appeals to be heard has yet to be set, but in the meantime reports of continuing excessive noise should be sent to ESC Environment Protection. As mentioned at the last meeting, delays in the purchasing of the small wood and adjacent grassed area at the rear of the council houses in St James Lane, frustratingly continue. Although both the

solicitor acting on behalf of the Parish Meeting and East Suffolk Council have been provided with the information required, there still seems to be a reluctance to understand that a Parish Meeting can own land. Although a way forward was found a short while ago, there has been little movement since then. The Chairman continued that at the last meeting the maintenance of the trees, fencing and land had been raised: this had been addressed in the summer by himself, Mr J. Henry, Mr A. Dinsdale and Mr R. Thurston, when excessive tree growth and dead wood had been chain sawed out and removed. The orchard tractor and flail mower had been used to open up the clearing and widen the pathways. There is still more to do, and as this area is an amenity for the village, it was pleasing to have had offers of help from neighbouring residents.

The Chairman then invited reports from the Church, the Village Hall and Village Orchard.

For the Church, Mr B. Crockford said because of the Covid pandemic, services and fund raising events had not taken place. Neither had there been a book sale, the main fund raiser, for over 2 years. And although the church building was in a good state at present, on-going maintenance was always needed.

For the Village Hall, Mrs J. Bastow said that the Covid pandemic had also impacted on their fundraising, and although some hiring of the hall for badminton etc had re-started, it was not producing as much income as previously. There continued to be a need to replace items such as the double glazed entrance doors and curtain tracks.

For the Village Orchard, Mrs M. Henry said the maintenance, grass cutting, tree pruning and repairs had continued socially distanced during the Covid pandemic. The weather had as usual played its part in the production of fruit, with some trees producing bumper crops, and others hardly any. Sadly another 4 trees had been lost which it was hoped could be replaced in the spring. The pandemic had also resulted in the demise of Harleston Cider, which was the orchard's only source of income. This left us with the dilemma of what to do with all the fruit. Leaving it to rot on the trees was not an option. Happily we found the solution eventually in the Halesworth Food Larder to whom the fruit was donated. It was used in several ways, as fresh fruit, made into chutney, pies and crumbles by volunteers and distributed to the housebound and isolated, or in the Food Larder. Grateful thanks, as ever, go to Mr R. & Mr E. Hadingham for their help and support, to those who have helped with the picking and pruning, and those who enjoy the orchard as a place of quiet relaxation.

The Chairman thanked everybody for their reports.

6. Locality Budget

The Chairman reminded {actually, he forgot!} those present that the Locality Budget was in the remit of our District Councillor Mr D. Ritchie, who had supported a number of projects in St James for which the village thanked him. He was always willing to meet and discuss projects / ideas with any resident or organisation.

7. Precept

The Chairman outlined the Precept process and the use it was put to; for example, the support of village facilities, projects, events and activities, membership of useful organisations, and support of village organisations. He added that it was prudent to keep a balance that, if needed, could cover the costs of unexpected or unforeseen events, and raising the Precept by inflation was a good way to do this.

Mr A Hadingham therefore proposed an increase of 4% - £80 in the Precept

Mr B. Crockford seconded - the vote in favour was unanimous.

Therefore, it was agreed that the Precept for 2022/2023 would be increased from £2000 to £2080

8. Any Other Business

Mrs D. Harris raised the problem of the large area of standing water in Mill Lane making walking there impossible as well as difficult for vehicles to drive through. The Chairman said that this had been discussed at a committee meeting and he had already contacted Suffolk Highways, but found that the matter had already been reported. He would try again.

The Chairman drew the meetings attention to two useful guides, one issued by Suffolk Highways with regard to cutting trees and hedges overhanging roads and footpaths. And the other by East Suffolk Council providing guidance about bonfires.

The Chairman then thanked also those continuing to help those in the village needing support. Thanks also to all who help maintain verges, paths, hedges, ditches and public footpaths on or near their property.

The Chairman also offered thanks to his fellow committee members, Mrs B. Crockford and Mrs M. Henry for their help and support over the past year.

Greshaw Green Enclosure.

As committee members of the Parish Meeting, the committee are also Trustees of the Greshaw Green Enclosure Trust.

No significant donations have been made during the past 6 months. There was a balance of £2173:00 in the account.

The Greshaw Green Trust is there to help any resident of the village who may benefit from help or support from the Trust on behalf of the community. Please talk, in complete confidence, to one of the trustees.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40pm