

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD AT 8.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY  
22nd March 2023 AT NAYLAND VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllr Robin Thorogood (Chairman), Representatives from Village Organisations, the Parish Council, Clerk and residents. Around 22 people were present including Councillors.

The Chairman welcomed everyone and introduced himself to the Meeting. He first proposed a massive thank you to Cllr Mary George for steering this Council as Chair for many years including the turbulent Covid years. With Covid restrictions being relaxed we were able to return to the Village Hall Conference Room including offering a Zoom link. He thanked Patricia Wilkie who has stepped down from the Parish Council and welcomed recently co-opted Councillors Samantha Treharne and Owen Brown. Apologies were recorded from Cllr Ned Cartwright, District Cllr Melanie Barrett, County Cllr J Finch and Nick and Mary Moriarty.

1. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly Held on the 25th April 2022**

These were approved as a true record. This was proposed by Cllr L Erith, seconded by Cllr P Fuller and carried by a show of hands.

2. **Reports from County and District Cllrs**

The Chairman read from the report from County Cllr James Finch. He had sent his apologies, and his full report is available on the Parish Council Website. This covered that fees for road closures were waived to celebrate the King's Coronation. Suffolk Archives are looking for volunteers in their branches in Bury St Edmunds, Lowestoft, and Ipswich. Suffolk Archives collects, preserves, and shares over 900 year's worth of Suffolk's rich history. An independent special advisor has been commissioned to further strengthen the reform of special educational needs and disability services at Suffolk County Council. Suffolk Walking Festival returns to celebrate its 15th year. Further host homes are needed for Ukranian refugees. The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Services Community Risk Management Plan has been finalised. Virtual Fostering and Adoption Sessions continue.

Cllr L Erith read from District Cllr Melanie Barrett's report. She had sent her apologies, and the full report is available on the Parish Council Website. It covered the Council Tax increase by 2.99% approved in the budget for 2023/24. Approval had been given to the project at Belle Vue House, Sudbury. Council house rents and sheltered housing charges had been increased. Early results were positive from bringing the Public Realms function back in house. The new Joint Local Plan continued to progress. They are still holding back car parking charges. Cabinet had approved a feasibility study to look at new waste depot options. She concluded by saying it has been an honour to work with us and she urged us to support the new District Cllr going forward.

3. **Village Hall Representative - Iain Wright in relation to the roof project.**

The events to raise funds for the roof were outlined. These are held in conjunction with the Parish Council and Community Council. Picnic in the Park, Afternoon Tea and Fun and Food Festival were planned. They were hoping £170,000 would come from the National Lottery, £100,000 would be pledged from the Babergh District Council CIL funds and a further £25,000 as a Community Grant which would make up a significant portion of the amount needed.

4. **Reports from the Parish Council**

The Parish Council Chairman, Robin Thorogood then delivered his report on the Parish Council Finances. Cllr L Erith reported on Planning. Cllr D Harris reported on the Allotments. Cllr M George reported on the Burial Ground, Cllr G Battye reported on the Recreation Ground and the Chairman updated on Caley Green. The Chairman reported on the bank balances and ring-fenced money for projects including the Community Infrastructure Levy monies we are holding for capital projects. He explained the Finance Committee met and had recommended only increasing the Precept by 1.9% for our proportion of Council Tax which was lower than inflation. Cllr L Erith reported on Planning of which this Council objected to 5 applications. She was grateful to our Tree Warden, T Bannister, for all her support. Sadly, our efforts in reviewing planning applications and passing our observations to the Planning Authority seem to be over-looked so this Council was following this up. Cllr D Harris reported on the Allotments of which one full plot had been divided into two plots to help ease the waiting list and make each plot more manageable. Tree planting was arranged for the Queen's Canopy. Sheep grazed our Allotment field last year and she urged dog owners to keep their dogs on leads. We were looking forward to the Annual Best Kept Allotment Competition. In relation to the Burial Ground, the Clerk is the Burials Officer for Nayland. The Parish Council is responsible for maintenance in the upper part of the cemetery, Babergh is responsible for the older Victorian section, the wall and the lych gate. There is a long-term maintenance plan for the Burial Ground which is updated and approved by the Parish Council each year at

budget time. A Working Party keeps an eye on the cemetery and discusses the winter maintenance schedule with the contractor each Autumn. The mature trees are inspected every two years by an independent tree surgeon qualified to do health and safety inspections. The trees at the far end of the cemetery are due to be pollarded and the work should be scheduled this year. Twelve fence panels were replaced last year. Incidents of damage to the flint wall beside the PROW footpath were reported to Babergh District Council.

One of the planned projects that has been delayed for a while is a replacement memorial to the Jane Walker Hospital patients buried in Nayland Burial Ground and whose graves are marked with metal crosses. The previous simple memorial, made by local blacksmith Stuart Pickup on behalf of the Friends of Jane Walker Hospital before the hospital was closed, had fallen into disrepair, and had to be removed. This plan will be revisited and the Burial Ground working party hope to research various archives to discover the history of the patients concerned. Cllr G Battye then reported on the recreation ground and explained the land was donated with the Parish Councillors as the trustees. The play equipment was beginning to look worn, so a big effort has been made to add some new items and improve the maintenance of the existing. This was helped by a substantial donation in memory of Margaret Underwood. The work had been ordered and we were excited for the results. A sunken trampoline and basket swing were being installed. In relation to Caley Green, the Chairman reported on little progression due to poor communications with the County Council, the owners of the Green. A meeting had been arranged between the Caley Green Working Party, Friends of Caley Green and the County Council and we were hoping to progress matters further.

**5. Other Reports from Village Organisations and Charities:** Cllr G Battye reported on the Love and Caley Trust Charity which has changed the way it supports the Parish.

**6. Questions and Observations**

The beacons on the A134 junction with Bear Street do not light up and it was agreed for a report to be made on the Highways Reporting Tool in the usual way. The hard-fought drainage improvements were praised. The Meeting took the opportunity to thank all their Councillors working hard to support this Village.

**7. Chairman's Conclusion**

The Chairman referred to the forthcoming elections for both the District, Town and Parish Councils and he urged further candidates to step forward. He then took the opportunity to thank our County and District Councillors and the hard-working Village Committees. He thanked the Clerk who has been with the Council for several years now and is a real fountain of knowledge and experience. He spoke of the role of Parish Councillor as a voluntary position in which they all take on relevant training throughout the year to serve the community as best they can. He thanked his fellow Councillors and finally he thanked all those attending the Meeting.

**The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.**