

Metfield Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 30th April 2012 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30pm.

1. PRESENT – Chairman Mr P. Mortimer and the Clerk to the Council, Mrs L. Silvester,
District Councillor Marilyn Curran, PCSO Steve Long and 11 members of the public.

2. MINUTES - The minutes of the 2011 Annual Parish Meeting were approved and signed.

2. REPORT FROM PCSO Steve Long

There had been 9 crimes during the year, a small increase on the year before. In fact there was a decrease of 6% over the parishes in our Safer Neighbourhood area. 2 crimes were solved.

As a cost cutting measure the police Station in Eye is moving to a site adjoining the hospital. A new PCSO Officer Ben Oswick will have responsibility for Eye town centre. Sergeant Jon Eaves is to take up the role of sergeant of Mid Suffolk Central team as well as our area. This will mean he has 82 Parishes to oversee.

A Community Speedwatch Scheme is in operation in Walsham-le-Willows and there are 2 more applications for Withersdale Street and Redgrave.

This November will see the public electing a Police and Crime Commissioner for the first time. He will be accountable for how crime is tackled in their police force area. Although not running the police they will be the voice of the people and hold the police to account and ensure that the public needs are met as effectively as possible and improve local relationships.

The police is now in the 2nd year of savings and although a saving of £4.7million has already been made we still have £13million to deliver.

The Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies have had continued success with Operation Breakout which has seen both forces patrolling together at night into the morning, targeting rural based crime. This operation has proved effective in reducing crime.

2012 will hopefully see a more high profile police presence with new technology in vehicles such as computers thus saving officers returning to the police station to fill out paperwork and to give a quicker way to check information.

4. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MARILYN CURRAN

The main feature of the past year has been ‘Integration and Transformation’ as a way of delivering savings. We now have a joint Chief Executive and Heads of departments. The appointments are now nearly complete.

The Joint Housing Board is now in operation helping the Landlord Services of both councils.

Despite the cuts there is some Grant Aid available. Any body can apply but they need a letter of support from a councillor or council. Adnams brewery is also giving grants.

There is an email address for reporting any worries about flood risk – Floods@suffolk.gov. 01473 264782.

Broome waste facility is still open but to get continued use it must be used.

In answer to a question about the ‘Pub’ Mrs Curran said there has been no news and no contact with the council.

5. PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr Mortimer said that the new council year started well with a successful Street Party for the Royal Wedding last April. This year we hope to light the Beacon on June 4th between 10-10.15pm in honour of the Queens Diamond Jubilee.

The Parish street lighting contract is now with Suffolk County Council and although some lights are not working as they should we hope this will be sorted out soon. The Parish Council is paying for work to be done to make the lights safe and to enable them to be off between 12midnight and 5.30am in line with county owned lights.

Terry Scholey and Terry Horton now have the grass cutting contract for the cemetery and playground while Joey Peck will cut the Meadow.

The Telephone box is now an 'Information Box' and will shortly have a sign saying this. A footpath and street map are displayed in the box.

Last year the village came 3rd in the 'Village of the Year' competition.

There has been no news or progress on the pub or building site at Guildhall Cottage.

In Finance we started the year with £5312.69 and finished with £5717.35. The precept is staying at £4750 for the 3rd year.

As Chairman Mr Mortimer has attended meetings about the recycling facility at Broome, Parish Liaison meetings and a meeting at Withersdale Street about traffic calming and speedwatch.

Mr Mortimer finished by thanking Mrs Curran, the Clerk and Parish Councillors for their support during the year.

6. REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Metfield United Charities

We had 6 meetings during the year and manage the funds of 2 charities, Metfield United Charities and Townlands Educational Foundation. The assets of Metfield United charities amount to £96,000 invested into various funds and 2 blocks of farmland of 32 acres from which we receive rent. Two thirds of the income is paid to the Church the balance being available for distribution. This is for the welfare of the poor and needy of the village and the requirements of higher education in the village. We made a total of 7 grants totaling £1370.

If anybody knows of anyone around the village who would benefit from our assistance please contact one of the Trustees in complete confidence.

The Allotments are looking very good and we have worked with Association of Allotment and leisure Gardeners during the year.

The Townlands Educational Foundation has given grants of £350 to 4 students in higher education.

Metfield Village Hall

The Village Hall Trustees now have 3 new committee members and bookings remain steady. The committee has set up a sub-group to help with Grants for improvements to the hall. We will be sending out questionnaires to all hirers of the hall for suggestions/ideas on how the hall could be improved.

Good Companions

The club has had another good year. We still have 14 members and the last year we had 3 outings –to Felixtowe, Blooms of Bressingham and Highway nurseries. We also held a coffee morning and went to our xmas lunch at the Fressingfield Swan.

Metfield Association of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners

During the last year we have continued to improve the site. The community plot is well used with events like The Big Lunch, Souper Sunday and BBQ's. 12 small raised beds can be used by people who do not want a whole or part plot. 2 beds are still available.

The main project this year has been to develop the Community Orchard. Grants from Awards for all, Suffolk County Council, The Alfred Williams foundation and Suffolk acre helped in this. The trees are now planted (with help from BT volunteers) and the Woodland Trust has given 400 'edible fruit' saplings to crate hedging around the orchard.

As a thankyou for all the help and funding received we have been supporting the 'Alliance for Sustainable Development'.

Metfield and Mendham WI

We have 24 members and meet monthly in one of the village halls or in Mendham School. Our President this year is Mrs Jane Williams, secretary is Mrs Christine Christian and Treasurer is Mrs Molly Smith. We always welcome visitors or potential new members to meetings which are advertised in 5Alive.

Carpet Bowls

As we have done for many years we continue to meet on most Friday evenings to enjoy our bowling and companionship. We normally play 2 games of 8 ends with refreshments after the first game. If there are more players we change to 3 games of 6 ends.

This season we have had less friendly games.

We shall shortly be finishing for the summer break but are looking forward to our Annual Meal at the Fressingfield Swan. We will resume bowling in October and happily anticipate this.

Metfield Under 5's Group

The Under 5's Group is currently running fairly well with 12 families on the register with up to 16 children attending each week. The slight decrease in numbers at the moment means some weeks we only just cover the costs of the hall and insurance. However enthusiastic parents are planning various fundraising events to enable the group to buy much needed equipment. The £50 raised on the 'Toddle Waddle' will buy a new trampoline.

Although we have been able to buy some new toys and equipment fundraising is still essential.

Metfield Millennium Wood

Mr Peter Twiss said the Woodland continues to thrive with 80 trees and maintain it as far as possible. Help is received from Mr Michael Lugo with hedge trimming. The newer hedge on the North side is gradually becoming established.

There are still some ongoing issues in the form of labeling and a seat. Tree guards are gradually being removed but muntjac deer nibble bark and branches causing minor damage. Rabbits are a pest making the surface uneven with their scraping and burrowing.

Otherwise the wood is good many years yet.

7. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GUY McGREGOR

In these difficult times it is important that the demands of SCC on householders is reasonable commensurate with the delivery of quality services. There is no increase in Council tax.

We have saved £50 million this year.

Our concerns have been especially focused on continuing libraries at Eye and Stradbroke. Discussions have been protracted but I am confident that the result will be a better service for the division.

Wind turbines and Electricity continue to be issues. I will oppose the use of the Waveney valley as a route for them from the offshore plants.

Road maintenance especially over the winter has been especially taxing but the highway service has been up to the challenge, But next year will see a new method of delivery.

Both primary and secondary schools in this area perform exceptionally well and I am sure we are proud of our schools' achievements.

The issue of speeding traffic continues to be a concern and I am having a detailed look at the Harleston to Halesworth road.

In answer to questions Mr McGregor said the cost of putting Electricity underground was coming down.

The vehicle repair facility at Halesworth will remain open and able to service the community bus. Mr McGregor said that if no regular service exists then concessions can use their bus passes before 9.30am. This will help the community bus on its routes.

The meeting closed with refreshments.