

DRAFT

Metfield Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8th April 2013 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, County Councillor Guy McGregor and 16 members of the public.

2. MINUTES - The minutes of the 2012 Annual Parish Meeting were approved and signed.

3. REPORT FROM PCSO STEVE LONG

There were only 2 reported crimes in the year this being one of the lowest sets of figures for all of the 46 parishes covered by the neighbourhood team. These were a hare coursing offence and criminal damage linked to the same incident although after investigation no action was taken.

In a survey 92% of people living in Suffolk feel safe. Domestic burglary was down by 4% and 5039 fewer crimes were reported and there were less incidents of anti-social behaviour.

There is now a new Police and Crime Commissioner appointed and the Chief Constable is now Douglas Paxton.

Eye Police station is now on the hospital site, Castleton Way. PCSO Steve Long now has 23 parishes to cover.

In questions and comments Mrs Game said she was pleased that the Church was included on patrols in Metfield.

4. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MARILYN CURRAN

Mrs Curran said that all the newly appointed staff will be in place by the summer. This follows consultation at community events. The job descriptions have reflected this consultation.

The Council Tax has been frozen for another year. The new rules concerning council housing are now in force but staff will help those affected. Pensioners are not affected. The Housing Board has been running a year now with tenants represented.

Derek Hailey is now Leader of the Council.

5. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GUY MCGREGOR

There will be no increase in Council tax this year and for the next 4 years. However there will be more cuts and regrettably Paddock House I Eye will have to close.

Hartismere Hospital has been refurbished but is underused. Also ambulance response times continue to be of concern.

There is also concern over the route of new high voltage electric lines and pylons. This may affect north Suffolk and South Suffolk. Mr McGregor said he is working to find the best solution.

The Chairman asked if more could be done about the water which still accumulates at Church Farm after heavy rain.

Mr McGregor said that land owners have a responsibility to clear water courses so helping any puddles to disperse.

Mrs Game asked about the water outside the village hall. The Clerk said that the drains will be cleared/mended soon.

6. PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr Mortimer said that Planning continues to take up our time and that permission to finish the new house at Guildhall Cottage has at last been given. The application for holiday lets at the Duke William has been refused but the future is uncertain.

The application for stabling and hard standing on Harleston Road has also been refused.

Mr Mortimer said that the Parish Council was aware of the mess at the land where trees have been felled and not cleared.

The Street lights have now been upgraded and are going off at night in line with the County council lights. This will cost the Council around £2400.

This extra cost and the increased cost of grass cutting has meant an increase in the precept to £5250. We also anticipate more expense when the cemetery has to be extended.

We are also continuing to make donation (£200 per year) towards the cost of keeping car parking in Harleston free.

Mr Mortimer said that Councillors had reluctantly signed the new Code of Conduct as for the first time it included details of partner's affairs.

We have received the Deed of Grant for access to the substation on St Johns Meadow.

The Chairman felt the Jubilee Celebrations were a success including the lighting of the beacon. Thanks to all who helped.

He also thanked Marilyn for her help and support, the Clerk for her help and to all Councillors for their contributions.

7. REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Metfield United Charities

The Trustees remain unchanged and met 6 times.

The Church and Townlands Charity gave 14 grants totaling £2700 and £3106 to the Church.

The remaining available funds are given to those in the village who need small financial assistance. No grants are means tested and all requests are treated

confidentially. Most of the donations we make come from our own knowledge of what is happening in the village.

The Townlands Educational Foundation supported 2 students this year at £350 each.

Finally when making out a will please remember the Charities as ‘every little helps’!

Metfield Church

This year the Churchyard has been tidied.

There have been 2 weddings one of which was at Harvest time.

Fundraising is always ongoing but improvements to the lighting, heating and alterations are to be made inside to make the Church more welcoming. To this end there will be meeting for villagers following the AGM on 24th April when plans will be explained by Mr Rudge.

Metfield Village Hall

Over the past year there have been many changes from Brenda Ray and Maurice White retiring and new committee members joining. We have also taken over running the monthly market which will bring in a small profit.

The results of the survey carried out recently to villagers outlined that updating of the villager hall is needed, in particular to the heating, bar, kitchen and doors. These future plans need more events and there are plans to hold 3 live shows.

Bookings have remained steady with the Singing Group and the Tea Dances added.

If anybody would like to join the Social event side pleas come forward.

Metfield Millennium Wood

The Woodland continues to grow and thrive. A circular seat has been installed around one of the trees to the east side of the wood. (with money given to Peter Twiss for his birthday last year)

It may take time for the soggy ground to recover after the harsh winter also rabbits have destabilized the ground further.

2 species of orchids have been seen growing in the wood –a welcome sight.

Waveney Community Bus

The bus is based at Metfield Garage by kind permission of Michael Glaysher. Whilst the bus continues to run most of its scheduled services, passenger numbers vary only slightly and it could be used more frequently by villagers. In some parishes on the timetable no passengers at all use the service. However several passengers ride regularly for appointments to doctors and dentist, hairdressers and shopping.

The accounts were at last presented by the new treasurer having been let slide by the previous treasurer. Donations from parish councils are vital as the Bus receives no contributions from the County Council. A few dedicated volunteer drivers keep the services running and the winter weather caused cancellation of a few trips

The future is under review with some lesser services being revised.

Good Companions

We have had another good year despite one member leaving to live in a care home and we sadly lost another member but in January we gained 2 new members.

Our outings this year included trips to Woodbridge, Snape Maltings, Dunwich, Southwold and Highway Nurseries. The Christmas Lunch was at Fressingfield Swan.

Our Coffee Morning raised £380 towards our funds.

Three members celebrated their 90th Birthdays in the last year.

Metfield Association of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners

Our Membership fee is still £5 and this gives benefits of discount for seeds and Hattens Nurseries and reduced tickets for our events. We also have use of a fruit crusher and press.

The Community Orchard has been the focus this year. Money was raised from local funds and volunteers came from BT. We have hosted The Warren School who want to set up their own orchard.

Community beds are available to anyone who want to grow small amounts of fruit or vegetables but don't want a whole allotment.

We hope to hold events including- Strawberry Tea, Souper Supper, Plant stalls, a quiz and a Tool maintenance Workshop.

Last year we supported the Alliance for Sustainable Development, setting up allotments for women in poverty in Zambia. This year the profits from our raffle £100 will go to The Warren School, Lowestoft.

Metfield and Mendham WI

We have 25 members and meet on the 1st Tuesday of the month. Our President this year is Jane, Secretary Dee Cobb and Treasurer Molly Smith.

Speaker's subjects this year have included Turkish Cuisine, Witches in Suffolk, Demise and care of Hedgehogs, history of Chocolate and a flower arranging workshop. We raise money for local causes the Community bus for example.

Groups of members go for rambles, discuss books, craft and go for pub lunches.

The WI is still popular as a social club for women as well as an outlet for talent, service to the community, personal expression and development.

Carpet Bowls

We continue to enjoy an evening of carpet bowls on most Fridays between October and May. While we always bowl to English Carpet Bowls rules we bowl in a friendly atmosphere and have great fun. We are fortunate in having some new

members who have picked up the game quickly and well but we always welcome newcomers.

Metfield Under 5's Group

We thank the Parish Council for their kind donation.

The group is doing well with attendance with 13 families on the register and 19 children attending at some time.

This year we again had trouble with the roof on our storage shed meaning our toys got wet and damaged. We had to increase the cost to £2 per week per family.

Although funds remain tight we have enthusiastic parents who take turns to [provide activities and plan fund raising events including a basic aid course which we hope to open to the community.

Since last year we have bought new toys and activity resources as and when they are needed. The future looks stable but as with any group fundraising is essential.

8. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Peter Twiss said that the bus shelter roof was in need of a patch repair. He volunteered to carry this out as he had the materials. The Chairman thanked him for this offer.

Mr Austin said that there had been a move to register the Pub as an asset with CAMRA. This may be acknowledged by the district Council in any further planning applications.

The Annual 'Litter Pick' organized by the shop will be on 14th April at 10am.

The meeting closed with refreshments.