

GT. BEALINGS PARISH COUNCIL
(www.greatbealings.co.uk)

**The Annual Parish Meeting of Gt. Bealings was held on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at
7.00pm at Bealings Village Hall**

Present: Sue Prentice (Chairman) (SP), Colin Hedgley (CH) John Carter-Jonas (JCJ) Regan Scott (RS), Trevor Harris (TH), Caroline Saunders (CS)

In attendance: Dee Knights, Clerk to the Council (DPK), Courtney Walsh and Amy Langley – Suffolk County Council (SCC), Peter Prentice (PP) -Bealings Village Hall Trust, Norman Porter (NP), Rob Munn (RM), Paul Ward (PW) plus 12 residents

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from District Councillor Dan Clery

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 9th May 2023

The minutes were approved and signed.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes -

There were no matters arising

4. Flooding – update by Rob Munn

RM commenced by explaining the set-up of the Bealings Community Interest Co. for which funding has been approved. The directors are Rob Munn and Paul Ward and the funds will be managed by the Parish Council. He explained the cause and effects of Storm Babet and illustrated his talk with a slide show. He showed a list of what has been achieved so far to mitigate a repeat, and some costings were explained. Photos of this work were shown, all of which took place after consultation and advice from the Environment Agency (EA) and Suffolk County Council. He stressed that the EA have been very supportive and expressed thanks to Paul Ward for the use of his tractor and digger.

RM showed a list of the plans for going forward and explained how these will be achieved. He placed on record his thanks to all the people who have helped and supported the efforts, in particular the volunteer labour force. In answer to a question, he said that the EA are not in favour of dredging.

SP congratulated RM and PW on their achievements so far.

5. Emergency Planning – Courtney Walsh, Emergency Planning Officer, SCC

CW explained the role for his team – the Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU), and it's organisation. He talked about the role of the Local Authority, done under the umbrella of the Suffolk Resilience Forum. He mentioned Community Emergency Planning Groups and how they can be more effective and efficient. He said that all work done under the plans are covered by ESC's insurance. SP asked if there was a single point of contact at ESC for this type of emergency. CW confirmed that there is and he handed out some magnetic 'Z' cards which contain all the relevant contact numbers.

NB. These have been left on the table in the entrance of the Village Hall for residents to take one

6. District Councillor Reports

Reports have been received by the Leader of ESC, Cllr Colin Hedgley and Cllr Dan Clery. All have been circulated to Parish Cllrs and are attached to the minutes on the website. CH verbally reported on fly tipping – he urged residents to report this promptly and take a photo. He reminded everyone that any tradespeople who remove rubbish must have a licence to do so. The price of an annual long stay car parking ticket has been reduced, there is new planning guidance for rural development, nominations are open for Quality of Place awards and free growing kits are being offered to encourage people to grow their own food. A funding gap has forced ESC to halt the Lowestoft flood barrier scheme. CH detailed some amounts awarded by Government to ESC and he concluded by stating that his Community Enabling Budget remains at £7,500 for the year 2024/25.

7. Chairman's Report - Review of Year

SP reported that Sally Johnson had resigned as a parish councillor in March after over 20 years service and the PC is now carrying a vacancy. During the financial year 2023/24, 8 new and 4 revised Planning Applications were received and considered, 4 are still awaiting a decision by ESC and one is subject to an appeal by the applicant. A number of complaints have been made to ESC regarding the perceived continuing inappropriate use of the water meadow in Lower Street. ESC are monitoring the situation but have declined to take any enforcement action. The revised Neighbourhood Plan is being considered by ESC and is currently in a queue. SP reported that she attended the first annual conference of the East Suffolk Planning Alliance. There was a general consensus that developers should speak to villages about their plans and local councillors and politicians should listen more than they do and speak to ESC about the concerns raised. She said that flooding has become an important issue for the village as a result of Storm Babet when 12 homes had some degree of flooding and 3 householders have not yet been able to return to their properties, and emergency planning needs to be reviewed. These items have been addressed earlier in this meeting. The storm also highlighted the condition of our roads and drains and Cllr Regan Scott has made an FOI request to SCC about the new roads contract. He will be writing to SCC with some proposals. The spare trees have been distributed to private landowners, and the testing of the water quality in the River Lark is continuing. There are vacancies on the speedwatch team which may have to cease, local volunteers have cleared some footpaths and a Village Fete will take place on Sunday 9th June. In answer to a question about differentiating between e-coli caused by human or animal waste, RS provided some facts and figures. The full report is on the PC's website

8. Community Reports

(i) Village Hall – Peter Prentice presented a report for the Bealings Village Hall Trust. This was another busy year during which new mat storage racks for Pilates were installed and the snooker table was re-felted. Appreciation was expressed for the donations from the two Parish Councils and to all those who have donated directly, or by supporting the various events, for the funds for the replacement roof and doors. He itemised the financial situation so far – the total raised is over half what is needed. The Coronation celebration was a major event, and Pop-Up Pubs and quizzes are very popular. Numerous volunteers assisted at working parties at which drains, footpaths and leaves were cleared, sleepers replaced on the boules court, rabbit holes repaired and two tons of topsoil was spread. Also, “in-house” repairs were made to the children's swings, climber net, tennis net, circular bench and see-saw. The sports court was prepared for the new season and new football nets are planned. Some tree work was done at a cost of £1500. The full report is on the PC's website.

(ii) Fynn-Lark News Report – A report was presented by Norman Porter. The Magazine itself is thriving with regularly over 40 pages, many in colour. However, the financial situation is on a knife-edge as the cost is now £4,000 p.a. Consideration may have to be given to fewer issues or reduced page count, but it is hoped that will be avoided. Grateful thanks

were expressed to the large team of helpers, 40 of whom attended a thank you tea party in the summer. Singled out for thanks were Jason, the printer, Tim Llewellyn and Peter and Vicki Carr. A meeting of all major interested parties will be held this year to discuss the way forward. The full report is on the PC's website.

(iii) PCC - A report was presented by Norman Porter. He commenced by thanking Sue and Peter Prentice for their work on the upkeep of the churchyard. He highlighted 10 bullet points about the history of the church and the financial situation – currently a loss of £4,000 is being incurred. Some possible activities have been identified which would help but would involve re-ordering the space at the back, for which funding will be sought. PP expressed concern that funds within the church organisation as a whole, are unequally distributed. The full report is on the PC's website.

9. Any Other Business - none

10. Questions

There were no questions and the meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Signature..... Chairman