

Clerk Mr R Quick 570976,
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SEDFORD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY MARCH 16th 2022 AT 18.30

1. WELCOME: Ms Crump welcomed all in attendance to the meeting.

PUBLIC: There were 7 parishioners present (this includes Parish Councillors).

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS: None

3. THE CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT:

The year since March 2021 eventually saw a return to more 'normal' ways of living and working for local people – which means, for example, that we are once again able to hold meetings and carry out other activities in this hall.

Between March and May, we continued to meet on Zoom, but then resumed face-to-face meetings in the Village Hall in June, following guidelines about social distancing, ventilation etc.

Roger Quick has now been in post as Clerk for over a year. By gaining experience throughout a full annual 'cycle', and with further training to provide an update of current regulations, he is now familiar with Council policies and procedures and briefs the Chair and Councillors accordingly. Living in the village has proved a definite advantage, making it possible for him to meet local people, monitor work undertaken by contractors and play an active role in community events, such as the recent planting of trees and hedgerow plants.

With the easing of restrictions and resumption of building work, there have been some new planning applications and issues raised regarding enforcement of conditions. Applications discussed at the May meeting prompted a reminder to residents of policies which are taken into account when changes of use and alterations to buildings, as well as new developments, are evaluated. Relevant policies include the Conservation Area, the local AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan as well as the Borough Council's and County Council Plans.

Several projects have been successfully completed during this past year. CIL money together with match funding from the PC and Village Hall led to the installation of outdoor gym equipment for the playing field in November. At the same time, bollards were put up to enable better control of vehicle access to the playing field.

With more residents and visitors taking exercise outdoors and walking dogs, greater attention has been paid to the condition of paths and areas of open space. The Council has reviewed responsibilities for grass-cutting and maintenance of footpaths and adjusted contracts accordingly. A handrail was provided for the steps to the footpath between the Church and the Old Vicarage.

New footpath wardens were appointed in May and they have been working since then, with Cllr Palmer, on proposals for a circular footpath. At the same time, they have been exploring options for a footpath and cycleway to Heacham. These discussions are continuing into 2022.

In the autumn, West Norfolk Community Transport expanded their service in this area to provide regular buses to Hunstanton and Kings Lynn. Continuation of this service will depend on how much it is used.

Work has been carried out at the Cemetery. A path was completed in April, burial fees were reviewed, safety checks done and a noticeboard purchased to display cemetery regulations.

New grit bins have been purchased, installed and filled. A new dog bin was bought and changes made to the location of dog bins at the playing field.

Speeding continues to be an issue. Additional members have trained to join the Speed Watch team, a new SAM sign was delivered in April and has already generated useful data.

Another long-term issue is water pressure. Parish councillors, with support from Borough and County councillors and our MP, continue to lobby Anglia Water to seek solutions to the dangerously low pressures found at certain times in the area around the playing field.

In recognition of the contribution made by volunteers during the pandemic, a memorial plaque was presented to the Council in December by the Countess of Romney, representing the Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk. The plaque has been installed in the foyer of the village hall.

Concerned at the deteriorating state of the former Village School, councillors have kept in contact with the County Council, which is responsible for the site, and made it clear that we wish to have a say in determining its future. This is a lengthy process and the outcome still uncertain.

Looking ahead, planning for Operation London Bridge began last June: this is so the Council is prepared and knows what procedures to follow in the event of the Queen's death.

Planning is also taking place for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations. With a variety of activities envisaged, we hope this will be a joyous occasion.

4. ANY FURTHER REPORTS OR ITEMS RAISED FOR DISCUSSION AS RAISED BY THE PARISHIONERS: None

The Meeting Closed at 6.42pm