

ALPHETON PARISH

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Monday 13th May 2019 at 7pm in the Village Hall

1. Welcome: Parish Clerk welcomed all those present to the meeting;
2. Apologies: From John Moore (away) and Trevor Rix (unwell)
3. Present: County Cllr Richard Kemp; District Cllr John Nunn; Retired Chairman of previous Parish Council term Mr Ken Watkins; Bridget Sumner, Madeline Gray, and the Parish Clerk Nicola Smith.
4. Approve Minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting - County Cllr Kemp proposed and District Cllr seconded that the Minutes were a true and accurate record.
5. County Cllr Richard Kemp's Annual Report:

The Budget + Cuts

We have a statutory responsibility to set a balanced budget. Suffolk County Council's 2019-20 budget was agreed on Thursday 14 February. This will see an increase in council tax of 3.99%, and savings across the council's directorates totalling £10.1m. We set detailed financial targets for all of our services and we monitor spend against those targets throughout the year.

A particularly concerning cut was the decision to remove all grant funding from Citizens Advice. This will be phased over two years, with a 50% reduction in the 2019-20 budget (£0.184m). Fortunately, the CCGs stepped in and agreed to provide Citizens Advice with £184,000 in funding this year, to make up for the 50% funding cut from Suffolk County Council. Although this means Citizens Advice will not lose funding in 2019-20, it does not address the longer-term problem of funding in the future. The CCGs have been clear that this funding is only available for the 2019-20 financial year.

The budget also proposes staffing reductions across all directorates, totalling almost £3m. We do not currently have details of how these cuts will be distributed and which staff will be affected, but I am very concerned that this will result in less efficient services and an increase in stress amongst the remaining staff. We are also re-designing the way that we deliver services through a series of transformation programmes. These programmes are not just about the delivery of savings. They are intended to focus action on how the Council's services can be delivered differently in order to provide better outcomes for individuals and the community at lower cost.

Whilst I respect and understand the process and need for Budget restrictions, I have been very taken aback with the proposed cuts to CAB and I continue to support the challenge to these proposals at Suffolk County Council

New Council Leader and Chief Executive

In May, the Conservative group leadership changed and Cllr Matthew Hicks became the new Leader of Suffolk County Council. Cllr Hicks brought with him a number of new Cabinet members and established cross party “Policy Development Panels” (time-limited groups tasked with looking at a particular issue or policy). There have been a number of these PDPs to date, and it has been a good opportunity for backbench and opposition councillors to be involved in policy decisions.

Towards the beginning of the municipal year Suffolk County Council also appointed a new Chief Executive. Nicola Beach joined the council from Essex County Council, where she was Executive Director of Infrastructure and Environment.

Highways - New Cabinet member and Director appointed

After a long search, Mark Ash was appointed as the new Director of Growth, Highways and Infrastructure in January. He joined Suffolk County Council in February, having previously been the Director of Waste and Environment at Essex County Council.

In addition, Cllr Mary Evans took over as Cabinet member for Highways in May 2018. Response times for pothole repairs do seem to have improved, and a new policy for repairing potholes has been implemented that should improve efficiency.

Highways Budget

As your County Councillor I have a small Highways Budget which can be used to support the parishes of Melford Ward. I have been very happy to fund a number SIDS/VAS pieces of equipment from this fund which hopefully will have an impact on the speed of vehicles in the various villages I cover and also improve the safety and quality of life for the residents

Locality Budget

Locality Budget for Melford Ward includes Long Melford, Glemsford, Hartest, Lawshall, Boxted, groups based in Sudbury area serving these parishes.

Funds have been distributed throughout the year as detailed below;

Carried forward from Previous year	£2,985.20
Budget allocated for 2018/2019	£8,000
Total available budget for 2018/2019	£10,985.20

Date	Beneficiary	Proposal	
04/10/2017	Suffolk trail Festival	walkie talkies (comitted 2017/18	£300.00
01/03/2018	Holy Trinity Church	Repair to bell chamber at St Catherine's, (committed 2017/18)	£1,000.00
12/03/2018	Long Melford Business Association	Long Melford Tourist Information (committed 2017/18)	£400.00
23/03/2018	Friends of Long Melford Library	Equipment for new age curling (committed 2017/18)	£500.00
14/05/2018	Lawshall Pre-School	Education Scheme (Forest school expert)	£250.00
21/05/2018	Sudbury rowing club	Equipment for rowing (Cox orb)	£350.00
21/05/2018	Lawshall Parish Council	Entrance gate for community field	£300.00
22/05/2018	Long Mleford Parish Council	Repairs to pathway	£1,275.00

be done. We have received assurances from the Cabinet member for Children's Services that an oversight board will be set up imminently, made up of councillors from all parties, as well as CCG staff and user organisations.

Review into abandoned Upper Orwell Crossings project

The Upper Orwell Crossings project in Ipswich was abandoned in January due to rising costs and fears the project would go well over the original budget. The county council attempted to find additional funding for the project but were unsuccessful.

Despite no building work having started, Suffolk County Council still spent over £8m on the project before it was abandoned, most of which was on consultants' fees. Nicola Beach (Chief Executive of Suffolk County Council) has confirmed that she will be undertaking a review of the project to determine what went wrong.

Motions from the Liberal Democrat Green and Independent Group

My political group proposed a number of successful motions to council during the year. These included:

- Developing a strategic, costed five-year cycling plan to improve investment in cycling infrastructure in the county;
- Committing to reducing single-use plastic waste in Suffolk;
- Declaring a climate emergency and pledging to make Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030.

Suffolk County Council Campaigns

Throughout the year Suffolk County Council has promoted and supported several campaigns in order to promote wellbeing, community caring and awareness and responsibility for the environment. These campaigns include:

Spring Clean Suffolk Campaign:

The Suffolk Waste Partnership was keen to support local community efforts to clean up towns, villages and our countryside, to help make Suffolk the Greenest County by getting involved in a litter pick during 2018.

Several groups across Suffolk took part to give their neighbourhoods a spruce-up, and, it is hoped that with more groups and individuals taking part this year, a real difference can be made. A litter pick not only improves the look of an area, it's a great way to get out and about, meet like-minded members of your local community, improve habitats and remove potential hazards for wildlife, and makes our county somewhere visitors will want to return to.

White Ribbon Domestic Abuse campaign:

Frequent absence, missed deadlines and unexplained bruises could all be signs of employees suffering domestic abuse, according to a toolkit recommended for Suffolk businesses. Employers were also reminded of their role in tackling the issue – thought to cost £1.9billion a year in decreased productivity, time off work, lost wages and sick pay. The toolkit was endorsed as part of the national White Ribbon campaign to end violence against women - launched locally at county council headquarters.

25 November was White Ribbon Day, an international day for the eradication of abuse against women.

White Ribbon is an international as well as national campaign aimed to stop domestic abuse against women – it calls for men to condemn such violence and for supporters to show their commitment by wearing a white ribbon. The campaign runs every year from 25 November to 10 December.

Women might be the primary victims of this type of assault but the Campaign encourages men to take a share of the responsibility in putting an end to abuse, however ***In Suffolk we support any victim no matter their gender.***

Suffolk County Council Localities and Partnership Specialist Team works with the Suffolk Domestic Abuse Partnership and with Suffolk Constabulary in support of White Ribbon Day. Work done in Suffolk to support male and women victims includes:

Suffolk Domestic Abuse Partnership has pledged to tackle violence against women and men by raising awareness of this issue with staff and partner organisations, and taking action to encourage victims to seek help. We have a long tradition of supporting local domestic abuse forums in each District and Borough and supporting specialist domestic abuse agencies in their work with victims.

Five ways to wellbeing campaign:

A five-a-day style health campaign was launched in Suffolk urging people to take action to look after their mental wellbeing.

Along with eating a good amount of fruit and vegetables, people in the county are being asked to consider what more they could do to stay healthy in mind as well as body.

Suffolk County Council (SCC) has started an initiative called [Five Ways to Wellbeing](#).

The evidence-based framework sets out five steps people can take to improve their all-round health:

- Connect with others;
- Be active;
- Keep learning;
- Take notice;

The launch event was held at Endeavour House in Ipswich where SCC's director of Public Health and Protection, SCC's cabinet member for Health and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service area commander were joined by further council staff and partners including OneLife Suffolk.

Eat out, Eat well:

The Eat Out Eat Well Scheme recognises the work of food businesses (cafes, restaurants and staff canteens) who are making it easier for customers to make healthier choices when eating out. The scheme also lets customers [search](#) for Eat Out Eat Well recognised businesses.

Eating food out of the home is now a regular feature of busy lifestyles. More than a quarter of adults eat out once or more during the week. Making healthier food choices easier helps people maintain a healthy weight and reduces their risk of several long-term health conditions.

Businesses are assessed by environmental health teams against a set of standards linked to the types of ingredients they buy, how they prepare their food and how it's promoted to customers. There's an emphasis on using less fat, sugar and salt, making healthier menu changes and staff training.

Business's [food hygiene rating](#) and compliance with [food legislation](#) is also taken into account. Depending on their score a business can be recognised by a gold, silver or bronze award . Successful businesses are encouraged celebrate their success and display the award to customers.

Suffolk Roadsafe campaign:

The Suffolk Roadsafe partnership aims to reduce casualties in Suffolk and increase road safety awareness through education, enforcement and engineering.

The Suffolk Roadsafe Partnership brings together organisations involved with road safety in the county. Its aim is to reduce casualties on the road network. We provide advice and run awareness campaigns to help all road users stay safe.

This includes information for:

- pedestrians
- cyclists
- motorcyclists
- drivers

The [Suffolk Roadsafe website](#) has advice and information about our current campaigns. You can also use it to find:

- Bikeability cyclist training
- driver training
- GrandDriver scheme

The Suffolk Roadsafe Partnership runs a range of [road safety courses](#). You can [pay for a road safety training course online](#).

Thank you

Finally and most importantly I would like to take this opportunity to extend a wholehearted and sincere thank you to all of those marvelous volunteers who offer continued and sustained support, volunteers in the form of groups or individuals of all ages and abilities who contribute to our communities with their dedication and commitment in such a wide variety of ways.

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.”
– Elizabeth Andrew

District Cllr John Nunn reported that currently there is not much to report from Babergh. The District Council election results mean that there are a number of seats that are being held by either Green, Independent or Liberal Democrat Cllrs and there are ongoing negotiation talks at Babergh to determine how that will be represented.

6. Reports from local organisations:

Women’s Institute

Again this year we have had some entertaining and interesting speakers. We learnt about the history behind a plaque in Alpheton Church, the Animal Health Trust, Tudor costumes, cake decorating and baby feeding through the ages to name a few. We also attempted to make a rag wreath for Christmas and one of our members showed us how to make

beautiful posies. Some of us were more successful than others. Our garden meeting was held at Sue Tatum's this year. Never before have we experienced such beautiful weather, it was almost too hot. But the garden looked beautiful despite the lack of water. That's two years in a row we've spent the entire meeting outside.

Our August outing last year was to Fullers Mill garden at West Stow. It was another hot day but we were able to sit in the shade to enjoy our refreshments. The garden was lovely and well worth a visit. Members have gone on 3 theatre trips this year to see 42nd Street, Goodnight Mr Tom and a rock panto of Cinderella. The pantomime was such a success that we will be returning next year to see Aladdin.

We are going to celebrate our Women's Institute 70th birthday in November with a social evening, inviting members from over the years. I hope we carry on this year as successful as we were last year.

Alpheton Village Hall Committee

2018/19 has been another challenging year. The Committee consists of four members, we have advertised in the parish magazine for new members consistently for the last 4 years but to no avail.

In 2018/19 no planned events (disco's/summer dances etc) were held, as poor attendance to events in 2017/18 lost money.

The Village Hall made a financial loss of approximately £1000 in 2018/19 due to reduced income revenue from Alphies Bar, regular clubs and private hires and due to increasing energy, utility and insurance costs.

The main aims for 2019/20 are:

- (1) to recruit new committee members
- (2) increase income revenue, wherever possible

(3) inform the community of the Village Hall financial position and that the only medium term solution to its continued existence as a community resource, is community engagement with the Village Hall and its activities, clubs and events – “use or before too long it will be lost!”

Report from the retired/outgoing Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Ken Watkins

Planning and potholes were significant issues over the last 12 months.

The saga of four houses on Lynwold’s garden, which attracted strong opposition, ran on through various revised planning applications before the plot failed drainage tests and the application was shelved.

Airfield Barns, although in an adjoining parish, was given planning permission, despite the officer responsible apparently not being totally up to speed with the area involved. Inevitably, once the application for two dwellings was approved, a new application came in for two more.

Several members of the Council met with a representative of Suffolk Highways in February, specifically to discuss potholes around the Green by the garage and layby and in Church Lane. Despite some residents suffering damage to their vehicles, none of the potholes were considered large enough for repair. A couple in Church Lane have been filled in since.

On the finance side, we managed to cut the precept (PC part of your Council Tax bill) by 0.5% with all the other Council tax recipients increasing their demands.

The Parish Council will be investing in new grit bins, and approved a new litter bin for the bus stop on the Green (yet to be in place).

Four members of the Parish Council did not seek re-election. Richard Kemp and Graham Maskell had served for 45 years, Richard Barraclough for five years, and myself for ten, nine of them as Chairman.

I would like to thank all my Parish, District and County Cllr colleagues for all of the time, effort and support they have put and continue to put into our village. I also thank all those in our village that volunteer their time

to help in the smooth running of the village. I would also like to thank our Parish Clerk for all of her support and work since taking over the role.

7. Date and time of next years Annual Parish Meeting – to be agreed later in the year.