

Kelsale-cum-Carlton Parish Council
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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY
3rd APRIL 2024 AT 7:00PM IN THE MAIN HALL,
KELSALE VILLAGE HALL.**

Present: Cllr Alan Revell (Chairman)

Cllr Alan Revell (Chairman) welcomed members of the public and representatives and formally opened the meeting. The agenda would be slightly amended with the presentation from William Kendall taking place after the reports and there will be a break after item 4.

Public Forum

Members of the public raised a few concerns; flooding, clearing of ditches, and the organising of a Community Self-Help group; the recycling bins on the car park and the need for regular emptying.

Cllr Revell stated that the clearing of the ditches on some of the land has been completed. The Parish Council are keen to form a Community Self-help group and will support this as much as possible. The County Council are more active with the drain clearing than in the past. The flooding issue on the Main Road continues to be monitored, and the Parish Council has cleared the ditch that runs along the recreation ground. The Environment Agency do assist but they do not have much funding. These items do remain on the agenda. The clothing bank in the car park does raise some funding for the Air Ambulance, so it vital to keep this. The bottle banks do become full quickly, and there is a need for more, but this would not be approved by the Conservation team. A fence could be placed around them, but this would require funding.

Richard Smith said that in a couple of years' time there should be additional recycling collections from home.

1. To receive Apologies for Absence.

Maggie & Clive Strutt, Caroline Harker, Helen Reynolds, Claire Buttle, The Clerk

2. Chairman's Report

A verbal report was given by Cllr Alan Revell.

(Full copy of the report attached to the minutes).

3. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

A verbal report was given by the Chair on behalf of the Clerk.

(Full copy of the report attached to the minutes)

**4. Reports from Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council
Representatives**

Suffolk County Council

County Councillor Richard Smith gave a verbal report.

(Full copy of the report attached to the minutes.)

Suffolk Coastal District Council

District Councillor Julia Ewart gave a verbal report.
(Full copy of the report attached to the minutes.)

A short break for Refreshments from 7.55pm – 8.15pm.

5. Reports from Village Organisations

Kelsale Primary School

No report received by the Clerk from Kelsale Primary School.

Village Hall Management Committee

A written report was submitted by the Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee.
(Full copy of the report attached to the minutes.)

Kelsale PCC

No report received by the Clerk from Kelsale PCC.

Kelsale Methodist Chapel

A verbal report was given.

IP17 GNS

A verbal report was given.

Kelsale Social Club

A written report was submitted.
(Full copy of the report is attached to the minutes.)

Suffolk Flora Preservation Trust

No report received by the Clerk.

Kelsale-cum-Carlton Biodiversity Group

A verbal report was given.
(Full copy of the report attached to the minutes)

Town Lands Trust, Kelsale-cum-Carlton

A verbal report was given.
(Full copy of the report is attached to the minutes.)

Guest Speaker – William Kendall

Farming has been his life, grew up on a farm in Bedfordshire. All his family are farmers. He is part of the New Covent Garden Soup Company as well as Green & Blacks chocolate. He lives at Maple Farm, which is a small organic farm. The country needs to find ways of using less land for food production. Life in the soil is very important to growing good food. The local ditches are full of water as the land no longer can hold onto it. The soil is exhausted. If the soil is properly looked after it would hold more water. The farms need to find a space for nature – there is a biodiversity crisis due to the use of sprays on farms. They have purchased a flour mill; the wheat is very useful for bread making. Lots of agricultural land does not produce food. Most of the wheat grown in the area is used for feeding animals. Sugar beet is not a very good crop for the soil. More vegetables need to be grown. The farm does hold open days, which members of the public are welcome to attend.

Cllr Revell thanked William for a very informative talk.

A member of the public wished to thank Cllr Revell for all his support to the community.

8. Any other matters arising

There being no further questions or discussion the Chairman thanked the representatives and members of the public for their attendance/reports and formally closed the meeting at 9.00pm.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

Alan Revell – Chairman

Responsible Financial Officer Report 2024

- The balance carried forward as at the 31st March 2024 was £99,757.11. This includes earmarked funds of £80,033.40.
- It was agreed that the Parish precept should be raised in line with inflation for the financial year of 2024/25 to manage ongoing increasing costs; as a result, a request was made of £24,373.00. This is an increase of £1552 from the last request, this is shown as a 3% increase for the homeowners on their Council Tax bill.
- As part of the statutory audit requirement the accounts of 2022/23 were submitted to SALC for the annual internal audit. The internal auditor's report was received ahead of the submission to the External Auditor (PKF Littlejohn), any recommendations have been noted and actioned. All the copies of the reports can be found on the website. The 2023/24 accounts will be submitted to SALC shortly.
- The Parish Council received CIL money totaling £3,097.43. This money has been added to the £61,454.35 making a total of £64,551.78. Some of this funding was used for some emergency tree work on the recreation ground, but a sum of £63,311.78 has been earmarked for certain items which include the improvements to be undertaken at the Village Hall to make the building appealing to hirers and to extend its longevity. This includes a kitchen refit, refurbishment of the upstairs flooring, roofing, drainage work, etc. These items are inline with the recommendations by the residents of the village using a questionnaire which was circulated to all the households.
- The Parish Council has had some expenditure since the last Annual Parish Meeting, which includes some emergency tree work both on the recreation ground and at Spinney Pocket. In addition to this there are the everyday expenses such as grass cutting, play equipment maintenance, car park maintenance and the printing of the Community News newsletter. The Parish Council has been able to obtain £700 in advertising revenue towards the cost of the newsletter, and more interest in advertising is continuing.
- The Parish Council received funding and donations towards the Coronation Celebrations and the Christmas Tree.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023/24 YEAR **TO PARISHES IN BLYTHING DIVISION**

FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD SMITH, MVO

This report by its very nature has to generalise its contents to be relevant to my one town and twelve parishes I cover as the County Councillor for the electoral Division of Blything, which I have had the honour and pleasure to represent since 2017.

Overall it has without doubt been a difficult year. At its start inflation was high, but the increase in Council Tax was limited to four per cent. Now, even though inflation is much lower, and heading down towards the Bank of England's target, we have had to increase Council Tax by five per cent, a higher figure than I have ever voted for since I first was elected to the County Council in 2010.

The reasons for this are many, as well as being complex. First, inflation has 'caught-up' with Suffolk County Council, albeit like a delayed time-fuse. This has brought increased costs, indeed very considerably higher costs in many areas, but especially in the areas of social care, which now accounts for 77% of all County Council spending, and a stratospheric rise in the cost of home-to-school transport, especially for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, who often need to be transported to and from school by taxi and, to meet our legal duties, these children often have to be accompanied by an adult as carer during the journey.

We are prone to these costs as a rural County; costs are much less in urban areas. To cope with this we have built and expanded our Special Schools across the county, and the number of places available has risen by 700 in the last three years. But the demand still continues to rise inexorably, and I hope another Special School can and will be established on the Saxmundham SET High School site when that school closes its doors at the end of July. I am working hard to achieve that outcome, but we are dependant on winning funding from the Department for Education for this project to happen.

This last twelve months has otherwise been dominated locally by two topics: off-shore energy projects and their effects on-shore (and Sizewell C comes into this category), and our mightily wet Autumn, with huge amounts of rainfall starting with Storm Babet in October, and seemingly not ceasing for the next three months. Both have had severe effects on Blything Division.

Work on the Sizewell C project has started, despite the lack of an announcement on how it is to be funded. Indeed this 'Final Investment Decision' is not now expected until the Autumn, as it appears to be difficult finding commercial concerns who are willing to invest in a project like this. I fear that the vast majority of funding may end up coming from central government and, if so, this could well become the next 'HS2' project, with costs and timetables completely out of control. Local communities are already noticing the effects of extra traffic, and this is just the precursor of much more to come, with considerable disruption to the way we live our lives locally.

Off-shore wind farms and electricity connectors between Holland and Suffolk and Suffolk and Kent are extremely problematic. Because we have good grid connections here, which costs huge sums of money to provide from scratch, our area is very attractive to developers and National Grid Ventures. SeaLink and LionLink especially have caused great concern across our communities, both in their possible landfall (LionLink may choose Walberswick), but also in their likely cable route and the disruption that will cause (for example being routed directly under Darsham Marshes, a site of very high ecological significance) and the siting of absolutely huge Converted Stations where the electricity is converted from direct to alternating current, before the electricity is sent to poor Friston, which is so badly affected by all these schemes, where it is likely to be uploaded into the Grid.

Saxmundham is the proposed site for one or more of these truly vast buildings, and it or they will be sited to the east of the town, on comparatively high ground. I have tried to do all I can to support local opinion in both Saxmundham and Walberswick, and also elsewhere in my Division, both via the County Council and locally. Both communities mounted a high-profile

and reasonably-argued fight against LionLink's proposals, but the most recent result seems to indicate that all their objections have been ignored. It is both disappointing and depressing that the weight and quality of local objections have been ignored. The fight must, and will, be continued and I will play my part as an elected representative. I try to support some local objection groups, but do not always find that I can agree with *all* their objections and suggestions, but I do feel that they are doing a good job and are well led.

Some villages I represent have experienced premises flooding on a scale unparalleled in living memory. To have your property flooded is a horrible, depressing and life-changing experience. The volume of rain we have had is vast, and garden and road flooding has also been widespread. We will all retain images in our minds of the scenes in Framlingham and Debenham, but local experiences were also bad. Frankly, the resources available to the County Council were overwhelmed and, even now, we are still catching-up dealing with the consequences. Responsibility is shared in a complicated way with East Suffolk Council, but we have tried to work together as closely as we can. I feel I must give a personal apology to those who suffered most grievously, and can promise that, over time, lessons will be learned and faults fixed, but we have to act within our tight budgets, even though it has been agreed that an extra £10 million will be borrowed to give funds to employ more staff to investigate where and why the problems have been, and to fix them.

More generally, I have tried to attend the meetings of my Town and Parish Councils as regularly as I can. I always give an oral report and am available to answer questions and note problems for onward transmission to those who can help. I enjoy good relations with my Town and Council Chairs and thank them for the considerable amount of work they undertake, ably backed as they are by a cadre of excellent Town and Parish Clerks. Blything Division covers a remarkable, historic and beautiful part of Suffolk. I am proud to represent it and its electors, and I will continue to work hard for all who live, work and visit here.

Richard Smith, MVO
Suffolk County Councillor for Blything Division
Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Skills, Transport Strategy and Waste
2 April, 2024

Kelsale cum Carlton Parish Council APM - Town Lands Trust

There have been some significant changes in the Town Lands Trust in the last 12 months. In November 2023 Paul Hartley stepped down from the Trust after many years of hard work and dedicated service. Rev. David Preece is now chairing the Trust.

Town Lands Trust owns the allotments on Low Road, and also Trust Cottage on Low Road. There are currently 30 allotment holders and some vacant plots. The trustees wish to thank Bob Paternoster for his ongoing work related to the allotments.

The new trustees are getting to grips with what needs to be updated and managed for these places which may take some time due to the administration needed.

Rev. David Preece
26th March 2024

Kelsale-cum-Carlton Community Energy Ltd (KCCE)

Power4KcC, also known as Kelsale-cum-Carlton Community Energy Ltd (KCCE), was set up nearly 10 years ago as a Co-op (technically an Industrial and Provident Society or IPS) based on two 4kWh solar arrays in my meadow which feed the Village Hall and Social Club respectively. The project was funded by 109 shareholders from Kelsale-cum-Carlton and the surrounding area who invested between £20 and £1000 each, making a total investment of £16,600. Power4KcC generated its first electricity in August 2014 and has since generated over 60 MWh (60,000 units) of clean electricity, saving over 40 tonnes of CO2. It has also generated over £10,000 in nett income for shareholders so, as we're now halfway through the life of the project, we're well on the way to being able to pay shareholders back in full within its (nominal) 20 year life.

We held our 10th AGM immediately before the APM on 3 April to review how the project is going and take any actions felt necessary to keep it in line with our original aims and objectives to provide a benefit to the community as well as to pay back the shareholders. We have a Board of Directors to run the project and we'd dearly like another 2 members of the community to join the Board in order to bring us back up to full strength, so If you'd like to find out more about how a Community Energy project works contact me at the address below. It's not a huge commitment as we only have 2 Board meetings per year, and I'll provide a full run down on KCCE to anyone who'd like to find out more.

Biodiversity Group

The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Group was set up by Kelsale-cum-Carlton Parish Council in 2017 to identify the habitats and species present in Kelsale-cum-Carlton and make recommendations on how to improve and increase them. In the intervening 7 years, the BAP Group have identified around 50 sites in the parish which are considered to have biodiversity potential and we have carried out biodiversity surveys on nearly all of these. As a result, we are well on the way to creating a Biodiversity Action Plan to preserve and enhance biodiversity through more appropriate management practises.

The habitats we have identified in the parish so far include:

- 3 nature reserves including the Simpsons Fromus Valley Reserve, Tiggins Meadow and Mabel's Wood,
- 3 Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs).
- 1 County Wildlife site,
- 132 ponds including 5 new ponds at Nonsuch Farm,
- 10 pits including 5 that are undisturbed,
- 2 churchyards,
- 3 species rich meadows,
- 2 ancient woodlands,
- 7 secondary woodlands including Spinney Pocket Park,

Our surveys have revealed additional sites amounting to a doubling in the acreage of land devoted primarily to biodiversity prior to the formation of the BAP Group and is now over 15% of the total area of the parish.

We're about to publish the first version of our Biodiversity Action Plan which will contain over 50 recommendations on how to improve biodiversity throughout the Parish. However, to take us to the next stage and enable us to start to implement the recommendations, we'll need more funding than the PC are able to provide. Therefore, we'd like to set up an independent KcC Wildlife Group as a charity with our own constitution and bank account which would make it easier to obtain grants and crowdfund our activities. If you'd like to be involved with this group please contact me at the address below.