

MONK SOHAM PARISH

(Draft) Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting held on 14th May 2019

The meeting commenced at 2010 in the Bedfield Sports Pavilion

05/19 - 01 Present

- David Entwisle (DE), Julie Giles (JG), Julian Sayer (JS), Cliff Arndt-Snelling (CAS), Graham Wigley GW), Caroline Berkley (CJB) and Charles Bagnall (CRB).
- Geoff Robinson (GR) as Parish Clerk.
- There was no other villagers present.

05/19 - 02 Apologies

- Gay Clarke (GC), Jim Hunt (JH) and Tim Denton-Cardew (TDC).

05/19 – 03 Chairman

- The meeting was Chaired by DE as the Monk Soham Parish Council Chairman under local government legislation.

05/19 - 04 Minutes of the Last Meeting (9th May 2017)

- These had been circulated and had been agreed at the full Parish Council meeting held on the 4th September 2018, but were circulated again.

05/19 - 04 Chairman's Report

DE opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present and then summarised the main activities and events of the past (2019/20) year. Salient points included:

- The PC had lost two councillors in that GC and CAS had not lodged their nomination papers for 2019/20 but had gained CRB. This had left one vacancy which he hoped would be filled by co-option at the first parish council meeting in May (since done - CAS has been co-opted).
- He expressed sincere thanks to GC for being a very valuable councillor for several years whose local knowledge has filled in many gaps for both councillors and villagers alike.
- Four full parish council meetings had been held over the year, together with one extraordinary meeting to discuss a planning application. This involved a second application to build houses on a plot of land opposite Oakfields, which again was rejected after a comprehensive submission by the Parish Council on behalf of villagers and its councillors. Any future moves by the applicant, if any, are awaited with interest.
- The day to day business of the parish council had again been centered around mundane items like potholes, fly tipping and the like and he offered thanks to GR for swiftly dealing with such matters and the other ongoing stream of correspondence he receives.
- All the councillors were thanked for their attendance and continuous input and enthusiasm.
- The members of the Countryside Group were thanked for their excellent work, especially in connection with Hungers Green and in particular to JG for her ongoing updates.
- The PC wished to thank Matthew Hicks, our MSDC and SCC councillor, for his ongoing help and support, despite his many other commitments.
- GR was thanked for his ongoing commitment and knowledge as Parish Clerk, which has a major input into the effective operation of the Parish Council.

05/19 - 05 Village Environment Matters

JG presented an update of past and ongoing environmental matters on behalf of the Countryside Group. These included:

- The grass on Hungers Green been had been completely cut in an attempt to control the creeping thistles. Julie wished to thank Robert Girling for his ongoing efforts and support regarding his work on the Green.
- BTS had cut down two oaks on behalf of UK Power Networks. These were the two which had been previously trimmed back in an unsatisfactory way. Their removal was also consistent with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT) Management Plan to give other trees a better chance in the same area. The felled wood had then been sold to a villager for £50.00.
- Matthew Reed had offered fifteen young horse chestnut trees for planting in Monk Soham. JG stated that it was too late to plant them out without a great deal of care and watering. Also that if Hungers Green should be considered as a suitable location, she had concerns that they did fit within the Management Plan, in that as they were not a native species. Julie also considered they were not suitable for roadside locations due to their eventual spread. SWT is to be consulted.
- There were still problems with some footpaths and Jim Hunt was warmly thanked for his regular and ongoing observations. GR stated that it was proving difficult to persuade some farmers to meet their obligations and that despite correspondence with the owners involved, it was rapidly approaching time to take the matter up urgently with SCC. In particular, Monk Soham footpaths 25 & 28, plus Bedfield footpath 23 needed attention. GR stated that he would first try again with the farmers one more time. He also stated that at long last the fingerpost for footpaths Monk Soham 26 had been replaced. JG stated that Monk Soham footpaths 11 & 13 had been reinstated but only to the minimum required width and may need to be done again when the rape seed grows taller.
- JG said that part of Hungers Green hedging had been coppiced as part of the SWT Management Plan. Also the legal footpath situated to the rear of the oaks had been cleared. (Monk Soham 8).
- The next meeting of the Environment Group will be the nearest Tuesday to mid-summers day on Hungers Green.

DE introduced an email from Tim Denton-Cardew regarding light pollution. After a general discussion it was agreed that it was important matter but difficult to resolve, not the least that the main “offenders” appeared to be situated outside of the village. It was agreed that every new planning application needed to be looked at on its own merits but should cover the light pollution issue. This had been done recently in the application for the tennis court at The Firs and the Shepherds Hut site in School Lane.

JS stated that he had been approached by Terry Mayes of Oakfields to completely tidy-up and cut the the grass on the site of the village next to notice board. He would then maintain it on an ongoing basis and is already doing this in the immediate vicinity of the latter. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that this excellent offer should be taken up. JS to further. The provision of a bench on the site may also be considered.

DE concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their positive contributions.

The meeting closed at 2055

Chairman