

**Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on Tuesday 22nd May 2018 at
TOWER HALL, Broadlands Way at 7.30pm**

CHAIRMAN:	Mr P Richings
PARISH COUNCILLORS:	Miss A Cracknell, Mr D Francis, Mr P Richings, Mr R Nunn, Mr M Shields, Mrs B Richardson-Todd, Mr B Ward, Mr R Whiting, Mrs S Todd, Mr J Westrup, Mrs M Brown, Mr M Newton
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:	10 members of public.
DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:	Mr R Whiting, Mr M Newton
COUNTY COUNCILLORS:	Mr R Whiting
OTHERS PRESENT:	Mrs S Stannard - Clerk; Mrs S Jenkins – Assistant Clerk.
APOLOGIES:	Mr M Bentley (family commitment), Mrs M Brown (work commitment), Mr J Wright (family commitment)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted as detailed above.

2. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON Tuesday 23 May 2017 at The Village Hall

These were made available to all present. Mr R Nunn proposed that the minutes be accepted, seconded by Mr M Shields with all in favour. The minutes were duly signed as a correct record with 1 alteration.

Matters arising: - None

3. ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR

Parish Council Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018 –

Copies of the PC approved and as yet unaudited financial accounts for year ending 31 March 2018 was distributed at the meeting. The Clerk explained all main variances on the previous year's accounts.

RECEIPTS: Of note were:- Total receipts at £178,297.23 was £12,561.80 more than the previous year (£165,735.43). Burial receipts were up by £9,740 at £37,519. The Council had gratefully received a total of £12,867.23 in grant money compared to £8,126.56 the previous year. There was also an increase in the precept from £105,458.36 for 2016/17 to £112,000 for 2017/18.

PAYMENTS: 'Total payments' for the year at £141,096.58 were down from £159,772.33 the previous year. This was accounted for by asset improvements the previous year at play areas, equipment for the parish office that was purchased the previous year, acquiring of defibrillators in the parish the previous year, higher expenditure at the allotments the previous year and lower salary costs in 2017/18.

Thus total cash assets at the bank were £180,281.74 at 31st March 2018, an increase of £27,139.93 on the previous year. Of those cash assets £125,017.37 was Earmarked Reserves. The year ended with £854.00 of cheques not reconciled (cleared).

The end of year balance in the general account was £6,623.93 better off than the previous year and the cemetery current account balance ended the year £20,467.44 better off than the previous year, a result from more income from burials. The cemetery account was also boosted by a number of people paying for Exclusive Rights of Burial in advance of passing away. The Business Premium account remained static with a meagre £36.56 of interest paid in.

No questions were asked

The members present accepted the Parish Council Financial Accounts for year ending 31st March 2018.

4. COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS and QUESTIONS

County Councillors and District Councillors – Mr Whiting provided a written report as a county councillor and provided a verbal report.

A discussion followed about pot holes, flooding outside Ipswich Town Sports Club and on Playford Road and speeding on Playford Road. Mr Whiting provided updates to the issues raised.

POLICE REPORT – THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

PCSO Mike Sarbutts was unable to attend. A short written report was distributed.

Mr P Richings provided feedback regarding funding for the PCSO by Rushmere Parish Council and confirmed that a contract had been signed to fund the PCSO position for another 6 months, until September 2018. Mr P Richings thanked PCSO Mike Sarbutts on the work he had done on Anti Social Behaviour at St Andrews Walk. Questions were asked about the parking issues around Broke Hall School. Mr Richings and Mr Whiting provided members of the public with an update.

5. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Mr Richings provided a written report looking back on his year as Chairman of the Parish Council. The full report is attached to these minutes at **Annex 1** and would also be placed on the parish website.

Mr Richings thanked the PCSO Mr Mike Sarbutts, Mr Andrew Duncan (Registrar at the Cemetery), volunteers that look after the play areas and distribute newsletters, contractors, councillors, retired councillors, the retired Clerk Mr M Bentley, the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk. Mr Richings also indicated that there is currently a councillor vacancy.

One question was asked about Chater Land Holdings Ltd.

Ms Barbara Richardson-Todd thanked the Assistant Clerk for her work on refreshing the Parish Newsletter.

6. OPEN FORUM

A member of the public made a request for a litter bin at the 5-a-side football goals on the heath behind Butterfly Gardens. It was agreed by the Chairman to look into doing this.

7. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and raising points of concern.

The meeting closed at 8.29pm and tea and coffee was served.

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Annex 1 – Chairman’s Report

Chairman’s Report to Rushmere St Andrew Annual Parish Meeting 22nd May 2018

The Council is looked after by 15 of your elected Councillors, with two Officers who keep them under control! During the year, we said a retiring farewell to Councillor John Withey who had served for many years, ably chairing many of our meetings, and our gracious thanks go to him. Councillor Claire Gower also took the decision to stand down and our thanks go to her for her contributions to the Council – my granddaughter really loves the piece of play equipment which Claire recommended us to buy. We welcomed Councillor Mike Shields to our midst and his Policing background is a significant asset to us. That leaves us with one vacancy to fill – expressions of interest would be greatly appreciated.

The biggest changes have taken place at Officer Position. Here, our long standing Clerk, Mel Bentley, retired. With over 25 year contribution to the Parish, initially as Councillor and then as Clerk, our heartfelt thanks went out to him at a presentation in December. Taking his place, we appointed our existing Assistant Clerk, Sylvia Stannard to the position of Clerk and welcomed Sarah Jenkins as our new Assistant Clerk. I am delighted to say that the transition was seamless and am really pleased to be able to thank all three of them for ensuring that.

There are approaching 200 outdoor items within the Parish to look after. We have 5 play areas furnished with associated play and adult exercise equipment, not forgetting the two village ponds. Dog, litter & grit bins, noticeboards, defibrillators, seats and the 2 village signs are provided, maintained and replaced, as necessary, by the Council. As part of a managed plan, we provide funding towards the well-used Millstream and Sandlings Local Nature Reserves.

During the year we added to our land portfolio with the transfer of a narrow strip of unkempt land in The Street to turn it into a managed mini nature reserve. Our only costs were modest legal fees.

We are very happy to receive grants from other bodies to provide additional facilities and enhance the Parish. In general, these come from our County Council & District Council colleagues allocated “pots of money”. During the year, we are pleased to note contributions, totalling over £11,500, from Councillors Dean, Newton, Whiting and Lawson to enable refurbishment of Yewtree play area, Local Nature Reserve improvements and purchase of a Beacon for the national “Battle’s Over – a Nation’s Tribute” event in November. Added to that, we have arranged installation of three defibrillators during the year, all funded from previous year’s contributions.

After a significant period of change, there's nothing really to report on two of our assets, the Cemetery & Allotments are indeed "ticking over" quite nicely. The cemetery looks fine and the new extension is maturing very well. Post-retirement, Mel kept his Parish interest going & kindly created an electronic copy of our cemetery records. At the allotments, the lack of people on the waiting list has been a bit of a concern, but we are hopefully now seeing more interest.

Over the years, concerns have been raised by Parishioners regarding the visibility of Police and a perceived lack of action. For a number of years, to address these concerns, the Parish Council has match funded, with Kesgrave Town Council, the employment of a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). Hitherto, the match-funding was based on the Police funding 50% of the costs with the other 50% split on a 2:1 basis Kesgrave: Rushmere St Andrew. This year, the Police decided to withdraw their funding so both Councils took the decision to increase (effectively doubling) their funding – a decision we felt was in the interest of Parishioners.

During the year, our PCSO has worked on specific on-going issues relevant to the local area, together with those occurring on a day-to-day basis. Some of these, I'll now detail.

A project jointly arranged with Kesgrave Town Council, a Community Speedwatch organisation was started. This is a means of identifying speeding vehicles, & the associated risk thereof, to enable other authorities to carry out appropriate actions. This start-up was enabled from a previous year's grant contribution.

Anti-social behaviour has also been on the agenda. In conjunction with the Police, some success has been made at the Bixley Farm District Centre with the installation of a locked night-time barrier at the Nursery car park, together with CCTV ANPR parking restrictions at the shop car park. Unfortunately this has moved the problem onto the highway so a 2018/19 strategy needs to be invoked! Discussions have also take place with regards to a Suffolk Coastal consultation, whence introduction, of Public Space Protection Orders which will deal with various facets of anti-social behaviour.

Vehicular parking near schools is one that is a major issue on a broadly national basis, and local concerns are no different in our area – particularly Broke Hall School & an ever growing widening environ. Tickets have been issued by our PCSO, where appropriate, but rather more radical action needs to be taken to provide a solution acceptable to all parties – very much a multi-agency task with money needed.

Looking at planning issues, we held 12 meetings throughout the year reviewing, and making recommendations on, over 70 planning applications. The vast majority encompassed extensions to existing buildings, although a small number were for infill "new build within the Parish.

We made representations, regarding impact on the Parish, to the application for the huge development at Adastral Park, Martlesham but this has now been given formal approval with the developers giving it a new name “Brightwell Lakes”. Again we have kept a watch on proposals for the Ipswich Garden Suburb proposals, as indeed we will should proposals re-emerge along the Bell Lane / Foxhall Road corridor.

At Bixley Farm, we noted work suddenly stopping in June 2017 on this long-standing development. A variation to a legal agreement with SCDC was subsequently accepted and some limited work appears to have restarted earlier this month. This does have an impact on the Parish with fewer households than predicted available to share the Council Tax burden. However, weighed against that, land at 155 The Street should restore a semblance of balance – interestingly this really “hot potato” generated absolutely no public interest when the final plans were reviewed.

With regards to longer-term development plan formulation, joint Ipswich Borough Council & Suffolk Coastal District Council Local Plan Issues and Options Review documents were waded through and we made a comprehensive response answering approaching 150 questions! No great plans for the Parish seem to be on the table, although we did see that IBC had ideas on converting some narrow strips of land within their boundary, previously identified as “countryside” along the Humber Doucy Lane / Westerfield corridor, to “housing”.

On the subject of a “Neighbourhood Plan” for the Parish, we have side-lined this following a Parish meeting called in June 2017. Run by SCDC, who subsequently produced a report and met with us, it was felt that issues raised were local, rather than strategic, and could be dealt best via existing protocols. Additionally, this sort of project necessitates public input to generate “their plan”. However, there was a definite sign of apathy when the possibility of members of the public becoming involved was broached!

Publicity-wise, we decided to introduce some colour, together with some competitions, into our latest newsletter. Our website is being brought in-house and changed are afoot. Feedback is always appreciated – they are ways of communicating with you. Other means such as Facebook & Twitter are possible, but there are definitely two trains of thought on this style of communication.

Looking to the future and marking the centenary of the 1st World War, our big forthcoming event is the “Battle’s Over – a Nation’s Tribute” event to be held at Ipswich School Sports Stadium in The Street on 11th November – tickets are now available.

We must mention, and give thanks to, those people who put their efforts in to making the Parish a nice place to live in. Our volunteers look after the play areas with visual inspections and litter picking. At Broke Hall Play Area, a rota dealt with the daily locking & unlocking of the gates.

Our Cemetery, Allotments and Newsletter Production, Noticeboard Servicing & Councillor Letter Distribution were admirably managed by Messrs Andrew Duncan, John Westrup & Rob Potter. Thanks must also go to our PCSO, Mike Sarbutts, for his work on your behalf. Mention must also be made of our regular contractors dealing with such issues as grass & hedge cutting & formal play area & equipment inspections.

Thanks must also be given to our Councillors who give their time and effort attending meetings, site visits and dealing with the various “issues of the day”.

And last, but not least, to our Clerk & Assistant Clerk for dealing so ably and professionally with the plethora of issues those Parishioners, Councillors & other bodies throw in their direction. Well done!

Phil Richings – Parish Council Chairman