

Minutes of the Dersingham Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at 7.00pm in The Garden Room, Dersingham Village Centre.

Present: 8 Members of the Public (Including 7 Parish Councillors and 1 Parishioner) Karen Orgill, Business Manager (BM) and Geraldine Scanlon, Assistant Business Manager (ABM)

Apologies: None received.

Chairman C Shepherd chaired the meeting.

1. A Climate of Change for West Norfolk talk by Dr Charlie Gardner about climate change, ecology and what it means to and for Dersingham

The Chairman introduced Dr Charlie Gardner.

Dr Charlie Gardner presented an in-depth talk to Parishioners highlighting the impact of the greenhouse effect on the climate, causing temperatures to rise, the Governments approach to dealing with Climate issues, the repercussion of our actions as individuals, and the impact on our environment locally, the problem of coastal erosion on the infrastructure through storm surges and flooding.

Parishioners joined in to discuss the subjects raised. Dr Gardner concluded his talk by expressing ways that, as individuals, changes can be made, and the rate of changes be slowed down and said the one most important thing as individuals is to talk about Climate Change and raise awareness.

The Chairman thanked Dr Gardner for his talk.

2. To approve the Minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting held on 17th May 2022

(a) To approve the minutes

It was resolved for the minutes to be signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record without amendment.

(b) To consider matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising

3. **Chairmans report**

The Chairman presented the following report

As we have reached the end of our four-year term as Councillors this will be a brief review of the last four years. In May 2019 I had the honour of being elected as the Chairman of Dersingham Parish Council. I am now older but not necessarily wiser but certainly more experienced in the mysteries of a parish council. I began with the hopes and aspirations of many a chairman before me but by early 2020 we were all facing an unprecedented challenge – Covid and all of the restrictions that brought. Throughout the various lockdowns the Parish Council continued to function, and we all got to grips with Zoom, where would the world have been without it. This year the Covid pandemic has been officially decreed as being over, although the disease is still with us, we have learnt to live with it, with the help of a few jabs. No there are no restrictions, no requirements to wear masks, life has returned to normality.

The Parish Council continues to provide services to the community – grass cutting, maintaining streetlights and emptying of dog and litter bins. The War Memorial Gardens have been restored to a garden of which we can all be proud. There have been two highlights, firstly the opening of the skatepark in a gap in Covid lockdowns in August 2021, a long-held dream of the younger people in the village. The project came in on time and on budget and it is used virtually every day. Secondly just before Christmas 2021 we replaced the Christmas lights at the Recreation Ground to give a modern feel. We have now replaced one of the basketball hoops and are currently working towards replacing the goal posts. On the more mundane side we had our streetlights surveyed and several were found to be in a very poor condition. We have received two grants from the Borough council and are in the process of replacing the worst.

We took advantage of the Woodland Trust free tree scheme to enhance The Warren and planted 420 saplings. Unfortunately, the extreme heat of the summer of 2022 has taken its toll and we now have to decide our next steps. We do continue to keep The Warren as a natural area for informal use by walkers, whether with dogs or without. We have planted two commemorative trees near the village sign in Lynn Road at the entrance to the village. A beech tree to commemorate her Majesty the Queen's platinum jubilee and an oak tree to commemorate His Majesty the King's coronation.

The last 12 months have been a poignant time, in April 2021 we saw the death of the Duke of Edinburgh followed just over a year later by the celebrations of her late Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration weekend. We worked with several groups in the Village to put together a varied programme of events. I am proud to say the village celebrated in style. Sadly, this was followed only 3 months later by her death. Last week we returned to celebrations with the coronation of King Charles 3rd, village events were quieter but none the less enjoyable.

We continue to publish and deliver Village Voice to all homes in the village. I would like to give my sincere thanks to our editor, Jo Jones and all those who give up their time to deliver the magazine, whatever the weather.

Turning to the buildings owned by the Parish Council - The Village Centre and the Social Club. They both had a difficult time with a number of covid lockdowns but are now fully re-open with business having returned to normal. The Social Club has a new management committee and terms of a new lease for the building are being agreed with them. We have almost completed new leases for the Sports Ground so that the new Sports Ground Community Interest Company can realise their dream of a new modern pavilion.

Having reduced the precept for three consecutive years we reluctantly had to put it up slightly last year to help us meet the challenges of rapidly rising prices. This year despite the economic situation we kept the precept at the same level without any reduction in the services we provide to the village.

We now need to look forward to the next 4 years, who knows what they may bring, but our emphasis must be to improve the lives of our parishioners.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my fellow councillors for their help and support, both practical and moral, over the last 4 years which have been challenging in many different ways and I would like, on behalf of us all to thank our hard-working staff without whom we would not be able to function.

Coral Shepherd, Chairman

4. Questions/comments and previous matters raised by electors that they would like the Council to take forward. There were none.
5. **Date, time, and place of next Annual Parish Meeting.** – to be confirmed
The Chairman asked the BM if the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) was a legal requirement, or, as Full Council Meetings give the public the ability to speak monthly, would it be necessary to have an APM in the future. The BM agreed to investigate the possibility of not holding an APM.

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.25pm.