

Minutes of the Dersingham Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 22nd April 2025 at 7.00pm in The Garden Room, Dersingham Village Centre.

Present: 16 Members of the Public (11 Parish Councillors and 5 Parishioners) Karen Orgill, Business Manager (BM) and Geraldine Scanlon, Assistant Business Manager (ABM).

Apologies: Cllrs Valerie Brundle and Dennis Wright.

Chairman C Shepherd chaired the meeting.

1. To approve the Minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting held on 24th April 2024

(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

Cllr C Shepherd said at the last Annual Parish Meeting (APM) Norfolk County Councillor Dark had reported the lady who was employed as the school crossing patrol had retired and there was now a vacancy for the position. Despite adverts to fill the position it still remains vacant.

Cllr C Shepherd advised a parishioner had, last year, requested an update regarding the development suggested at Dodds Hill and the old Community Centre site. There is still no update regarding any future plans for either location.

2. Chairmans report

The Chairman presented the following report

Dersingham Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report 2025

For those of you who are not familiar with the Parish Council, we provide a variety of services to the village, producing and circulating Village Voice, providing dog waste bins, street lights away from the main roads, grass cutting of land within our control, maintaining over 100 trees, 4 public noticeboards, litter bins, and seats and benches. We own and maintain the recreation ground, several informal open areas on the Mountbatten Estate, the war memorial gardens and The Warren. We meet together on the last Monday of every month, apart from a recess in August with the meat of our work being done through 5 committees, environment, finance and administration, communications and staffing. All apart from Staffing are open to the public. Our full complement of councillors is 18 but we currently have 15, so, if you would like to join us or know of anyone interested, please speak to me or our Business Manager, Karen Orgill.

The Parish Council has over 2.4 million pounds worth of assets, the main two are firstly the village centre which, under a lease, is ably looked after for us by the Dersingham Village Centre Association, a registered charity. And secondly the Queen Elizabeth 2nd Jubilee Hall, rented by the Dersingham Social Club, they have been under new management over the last couple of years and it is now a vibrant

and popular facility in the village. I have already mentioned our other assets but we also lease the Sports Ground in Manor Road from the Sandringham Estate. In turn, we are preparing a lease for the ground for the newly formed charity, the Dersingham Sports Ground Association. They maintain the land for football, cricket and tennis, all of which have active clubs and they are working towards extending and refurbishing the pavilion which is in a poor condition and is no longer fit for purpose. A planning application was submitted in January and a favourable decision is expected in June, following the necessary bat surveys. This decision will enable the charity to complete the funding to carry out the work.

As councillors our work is varied throughout the year, from regularly scrutinising our accounts to ensure that parishioners money is well managed to commenting on planning applications within the village and producing Village Voice. Despite rising prices we were able to keep the precept at last years level, mainly due to the council tax increasing for second home owners. Importantly we have not had to reduce the level of services.

We have three members of staff - our Business Manager, Karen Orgill who has overall responsibility to keep us on the straight and narrow, our Responsible Finance Officer Joanne MacCallum who looks after finances and our Assistant Business Manager, Geraldine Scanlon who supports the BMs work and has a specific role to work with the editor of Village Voice, to look after and obtain new advertisers and coordinate our team of volunteers who deliver the magazine to everyone 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.

Over the last 12 months we have quietly achieved the following – commented to the Borough Council on 36 planning applications and given small donations to the following – the Dersingham Village Choir to assist them in their rehearsals, NARS, Baby Basics, Dersingham United Charities, East Anglian Air Ambulance and Tapping House. We also provide grants to St Nicholas Church and the Sports Ground Association to assist with the costs of grass cutting and also to the Heacham Car Scheme. We have refurbished and repositioned the goal mouths in the Recreation Ground, renewed the grass cutting and street light electricity supply contracts, repaired some equipment at the childrens play area at the Recreation Ground, repainted 3 benches, refurbished the village sign at Lynn Road at the entrance to the village and replaced the noticeboards at the library and Spar. In June we will be renewing the contract for the maintenance of the street lights. Our main project his year will be to repair the paving at the war memorial gardens.

We continue to use our electronic system of data storage and sharing for councillors and staff. This makes it easier for councillors to prepare for meetings and reduced some of the workload for staff. We now have a new website, which includes a record of all our meetings back to 2015, has all of our adopted policies, as well as annual financial information. There is also some general information about the village, including about a number of active clubs and societies.

Last year I reported that the post for the school crossing patrol officer for Manor Road/Doddshill Road had been advertised not only on the county council website but also around the village on our noticeboards. Unfortunately, over 12 months later the post is still vacant.

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 year. Most importantly I would like, on behalf of us all, to give a huge thanks to our 3 hard-working members of staff who quietly, efficiently and calmly beaver away in the background and without them we certainly would not be able to function.

Coral Shepherd, Chairman

3. Questions/comments and previous matters raised by electors that they would like the Council to take forward.

It was noted that at the previous APM an offer of free defibrillator training had been made by NARS. The BM said she would contact NARS regarding the matter.

Parishioner 1 asked if anything could be done regarding the parking along Manor Road outside the Coach & Horses. As the number of vehicles parked is becoming a safety issue. The Chairman said the matter had been discussed with a Norfolk County Council Highways Engineer who had advised NCC would have to carry out a survey which would include contacting residents along Manor Road who would be impacted by having double yellow lines outside their property. The costings of the survey would be payable whether even if NCC refused the application.

Parishioner 1 also asked if the footpath from the Coach & Horses to the centre was going to be resurfaced and if there were plans for any additional streetlights along the footpath. The Chairman advised that NCC had scheduled the resurfacing work to take place, but no date had been given and said there had been no proposals for additional lighting.

Parishioner 2 said work had been carried out to clear the ditches at Sandringham Hill, but the dirt removed had been piled pavement side of the ditch which meant it is encroaching onto the footpath. The BM said she had discussed the matter with the NCC highways technician and was advised that is their process, to clear the ditches and place what is removed footpath side to prevent pedestrians from falling into the ditch. She said she would take a photo of the area and contact NCC again.

Parishioner 2 asked if the defibrillator that had been sent away for repair had been returned and if there had been any cost incurred for the repair. The BM said it had been returned and the repairs were covered by the warranty on the unit.

4. Keynote Speaker – Nick Padwick farm director from Ken Hill Farms.

Mr Padwick gave a detailed talk about regenerative farming where experts invest time growing healthy food while fostering amazing farmland biodiversity and storing carbon in our soils. Farm -scale soil restoration putting the science into practice as a restoration programme for soils, based on a proprietary

process for creating and applying biologically complete compost products on a farming scale. Over several seasons using continual analysis to test and adjust the programme to ensure the investment in soil health yields results.

Date, time, and place of next Annual Parish Meeting. – to be confirmed

With no further business the meeting closed at 7.55pm.

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