



Waldringfield Parish Council

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16 April 2025

Present: Parish Councillors Kay, Forsdike, Reid
ESC Councillors Nimmney and Reeves
Members of the public: 15
Cllr Kay opened the meeting at 19.35pm.

1. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from SCC Councillor Mulcahy; MP Jenny Riddell-Carpenter;

2. To confirm and sign minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17 April 2024.

Cllr Kay proposed acceptance of the minutes, which was approved by all in attendance.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

There were no matters arising.

4. To receive a brief report from the Chair of the Parish Council, Ian Kay.

Cllr Kay presented a summary to the PC's annual activities. He outlined the council's make up and councillor responsibilities and he thanked former members for their service to the Council. He touched on the playing fields (being the Council's only land asset in the villages) and upgrades being planned there. He also provided an update on the progress and plans for Brightwell Lakes development, and a review of the statistics for planning application consultations received. He also noted the qualification of the Council's Clerk.

5. To receive reports from District and County Councillors in attendance

The Chair welcomed Cllrs Reeves and Nimmney who are the two elected ward councillors for Waldringfield, and presented on 2 specific topics:

Planning

Cllr Reeves outlined that the Government requires local councils to provide for a five-year supply of housing land. Up to earlier this year both the Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Local Plans were sufficient for between 5 and 6 years. In 2024 East Suffolk Council was required to build an average of 905 homes per year.

The new Labour Government has now increased the expected number to 1,644 per year – an increase of 82%. The effect of this is that in Waveney there is now no longer a five-year supply of approved housing land and in Suffolk Coastal we will cease to have a five-year supply from around September 2025.

Waldringfield Parish Council

Unfortunately - this means that speculative developers may now put forward plans for substantial developments and while they, will need to comply with the policies under the existing local plans, there will be a presumption for development to be approved.

Cllr Nimmney discussed the local council restructuring, Suffolk and Norfolk have been fast-tracked – at the request of the two county councils - which has led to the County council elections which were due to be held this May being postponed.

The Government intends to produce a Strategic Mayoral Authority which would provide for one elected Mayor covering both Norfolk and Suffolk. The Mayoral election is intended to take place in 2026.

The existing local authorities have offered three suggestions for re-organisation of councils within Suffolk.

- A single unitary council for the whole of Suffolk – current population circa 790,000. Multiple unitary authorities – either two or three. Most of the current district councils believe that a single unitary authority for Suffolk would be too unwieldy.
- Ipswich Borough Council has put forward the three unitary authorities solution which would expand into a Greater Ipswich would include areas such as Felixstowe, Martlesham, Kesgrave and Woodbridge and their surrounding villages being absorbed with Ipswich, leaving East Suffolk as largely the rural and coastal areas up to and including Lowestoft.
- Our own preferred option at present would be two unitary councils – one covering the current district council areas of West Suffolk, Babergh and Mid-Suffolk and the second covering the current East Suffolk Council area plus the current Ipswich Borough Council area.

The Chair closed the formal part of the meeting at 20:26pm.

Refreshments were provided by the members of the Village Hall committee (these were gratefully received).

The Waldringfield Village Hall Trust – Chairperson, Phil Hall presented on behalf of the Waldringfield VHT

Phil discussed the importance to village halls to smaller communities, and the talked about the background of the “new” village hall which is 25 years old in 2026. A National Lottery grant application for some upgrades has unfortunately been turned down but they are reapplying. Improvements sought are soundproofing between halls, replacing Deben Hall curtains, and replacing the kitchen hatch. In next 2 years the boiler and kitchen refurbishment are also required. Phil also took time to thank all those who brought fantastic events to the Hall in the past year, and all of the volunteers who make running the hall possible.

Tree Wardening and Church Field Trust – WPC Tree Warden Christine Fisher Kay presented on behalf of the Tree Wardens and the Church Field Trust.

Church Field Trust

In 2003 Church Field was gifted to the Trust to be maintained as a leisure area benefitting the village. Recent donations from the village allowed the purchase of a refurbished mower. Paths and

Waldringfield Parish Council

the playing fields are now easily maintained and the rest allowed to grown long. WWG have held events there for children and hope to again. Ast the AGM (end of November) there are a number of ideas being consider to improve the offer on the field (eg another set of goalposts).

Tree Wardening

The Tree Council supplies hedging plants to those who would require them. The Waldringfield Tree wardens have requested 100 meters of hedging plants (hawthorn, hazel etc), and thoughts on where these would be of benefit are welcome. Every 10M, they also offer Hedgerow trees, as these are suffering from root destruction, drought and soil destruction. So this is something she would like to encourage and replenish in the Parish. National Hedgerow week coming in May.

Waldringfield Primary School – Headteacher Sarah Wood presented

Sarah spoke about the falling roll at Waldringfield, indicating there are about 20 students in the village that walk to school. She also reported the WPS has successfully applied for a grant for EY provision (entry at 3yo), which is hopefully secure long-term pupils. She also announced that From 01 April, WPS joined the Asset Education Trust – which is Suffolk based primary trust. The Trust have assisted in facilitating a new perimeter fence being installed and the a kitchen upgrade.

The Chair closed the meeting at 21:19 pm

The following groups provided a report that was made available at the meeting, and which will be posted on the website: SCC Councillor Mulcahy, the WPC Clerk and RFO Report, the WPC Tree Warden, Waldringfield Fairway Committee, Waldringfield Primary School, the Waldringfield History Group, Waldringfield Wildlife Group.