

Minutes of Playford's Annual Parish Meeting held at Playford Parish Hall on Wednesday, 7th May 2025 at 6.30pm

Present:

Ben Evans –Chairman
Joan Metcalfe - Vice-chairman
Stephen Hicks - Councillor
Martin Hill – Councillor
Lee Knighting – Councillor
Colin Hedgley – District Councillor

In attendance:

Wendy Cook - Clerk

Also present:

Rev Gary Jones
Marian Hedgley
Cllr Ian Ransome
Ben Wale
Lynne Dawes
Sally Herrington
Norman Porter
Glen Thimblethorpe
Julia & Adie Saunders

The meeting started at 6.30pm. Ben Evans was unanimously voted in as Chairman for the evening and took the chair.

1. Apologies for Absence

Ursula Richards

2. To approve the Minutes from the Meeting held on 8th May 2024

Steve Hicks proposed acceptance of the minutes and this was seconded by Martin Hill – these were duly signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes: None

4. Chairman's Report

Ben's report was circulated in advance to all councillors. In brief:

- Ben thanked the councillors for their work in the past year. In also thanked Marian Hedley for her work as Clerk over the last 12 years. Marian stepped down as clerk earlier in the month. Ben Welcomed Wendy Cook as new Clerk
- The Neighbourhood Plan was adopted last year and is now in force
- Ben Thanked Ursula Richards who has spearheaded the new Emergency Plan, and said that this should give the village a clear set of actions to help in case of a wide variety of potential emergencies and gives a list of skills and resources available within the community.

- We continue to be grateful to Tracy Herrington for her efforts deploying the Speed Indicator Device (SID) around the Village. Playford now has its own SID thanks to funding from SAVID.
- The Boules Piste has been rebuilt by Sam Webber and his team using funds from District Cllr Hedgley Enabling Communities Budget and support from the Village Hall Committee.
- The Parish Council has a new website and .gov.uk domain: Playfordparish.gov.uk
- The Improvements to traffic management and drainage on C324 by Clematis Cottage originally agreed in 2023 look unlikely to be made until the backlog of works following Storm Babet have been completed over the coming few years.
- The Chairman was sorry to report that our efforts to get the footpath between Church Road and Butts Road reinstated has been unsuccessful.

For details of the above in full please see report appended to these minutes.

5. County council report – none

6. District Council report

District Cllr Colin Hedgley presented his report which is appended to these minutes. In brief:

- Colin stated that there was no update to Westerfield Quarry
- Car parking – Apps can now be used to pay for parking across ESC, however the cost of parking has increased, but all carparks will have an electrical charging point
- The ESC Fraud Team are always at work and last year took a woman to court where she was given a suspended prison sentence
- The annual Operation Camouflage took place in the Summer holidays full of action-packed activities for young people aged 8 – 16 years old that live in or go to school in East Suffolk
- Devolution remains a hot topic and there is lots of information available of both the Suffolk County council website
- Orwell Bridge Repairs – Repairs are due to be carried out from mid June for about seven weeks.
- There is an ongoing programme to reduce roadside litter and improve the appearance of the district for both residents and visitors
- Colin finished by saying that he still has funds available in his Enabling Budget

7. Report from Norman Porter – Editor of FLN

Norman reported that the Fynn Lark News is thriving thanks to donations from the local parish councils and paid advertising. On average, forty pages are published every month which costs approx £4000 per year

He has received compliments from people praising the varied content and is never short of articles to be published. He praised the fantastic team of helpers which numbers about 60 with especial praise to Tim Llewellyn for putting it all together each month and to Peter & Vicky Carr for organising the distribution.

The FLN is currently free to all households in Playford, Great & Little Bealings and Culpho and relies on generous donations from local parishioners to boost its finances. Norman thanked the Parish Council for their support and donations. He also mentioned that the Fynn Lark News is 10 years old !

Norman was thanked for his report by the chairman.

8. Emergency Plan

The Chairman read out a Report from Ursula Richards. A finalised copy of the Emergency Plan has now been lodged with Suffolk County Council. The Clerk and Cllr Joan Metcalfe have been sent a copy so that it can be included on the website. There are two versions, A public edition, this is the version that will be available on the website, and, when possible emailed to residents. It contains contacts of the coordinators. The second version has all of the contact details of the Emergency Plan Group volunteers and relevant council teams, this copy is held by the Volunteers, SCC and the Clerk. Ursula also wanted to thank the 14 Volunteers who are part of the group, especially Lynne Dawes, Glen Thimblethorpe and Ben Wale who have agreed to be coordinators.

9. Drug Problem in Playford

Ben Wale spoke about an incident where a child found what was described as a 'metal hook' at an event on the playing field in March. It is believed that this was, in fact, a needle. Mr Wale reminded residents to stay vigilant and wanted to raise awareness of any unwanted behaviour.

10. Report from Rev Gary Jones

Gary Jones gave his report:

- He stated that church services continue twice a month and numbers are steady, but there's always room for improvement
- There has been four coffee mornings over the last year and these have been successful, not only to raise the profile of the church, but also bringing in some much needed income
- In the last year there has been three weddings during the Summer months
- The Clarkson Day was led by Reverend Alan Forsdike and numbers were up significantly for this important occasion.
- Christmas services were well attended with 90+ at the Carol service, plus Christmas morning was very well attended
- Every Five years we are required by the Diocese to have the church inspected for structural and safety reasons and Gary was pleased to report there were no A listings, however there is some work that needs to be completed which the Church is going to have to seek funding for.

- Over the next year the church will be looking for grant funding and also asking the community to help. The Church has been on site for 624 years and it is hoped will remain for another 624 years.
- invaluable help in with setting up for Sunday service.

11. Open Forum

A resident asked about the new tree in the play area as it's looking a little 'sick' and maybe a watering rota should be reinstated. She also commented that the boules piste was looking good

Ben Wale mentioned a Youth Group that meets fortnightly and was looking for some storage space for their equipment. This was passed to the Village Hall Committee.

12. AOB – none

The meeting ended at 7.11pm

Signed
Chairman