

WALSOKEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Walsoken Annual Parish Meeting** held at the All Saints Church Community Room on Tuesday the 7th of May 2024 from 7.00pm

Present :

Councillors – Fred Leach - Chair, John Woolley, Andy Houghton, Clive Bettinson, Joanna Taylor, Yvonne Cocks, and Lynn Clark. Caroline Boyden, Parish Clerk.
County & Borough Councillor, Julian Kirk and Borough Councillor, Richard Blunt.
1 member of the Public

1. Welcome from Chairman to everyone
2. Apologies – Cllrs Harwin & Snow (illness), Cllr Luff (holiday) & Chris Dawson (work commitments).
3. To confirm the minutes of the Annual Parish/Assembly Meeting on the 9th of May 2023.
Proposed Cllr Woolley, seconded Cllr Bettinson and approved by all present at that meeting.
4. Chairman’s Report:
We have installed 2 new bus shelters on Lynn Road and are now in use and 1 on Blackbear Lane. We have a new street light maintenance contract with Cozens and a new churchyard grounds maintenance contract with Tawny Owl Services, both of which are working well. There has been flooding in the village with ongoing work via the Internal Drainage Board to ensure improvements are made. Thanks to Julian Kirk for his support. Other areas, particularly where development is taking place, need to consider drainage on the planning applications. The leased land from the NCC for farming will be given up in September 2024 and boundary issues have arisen which require clarification by NCC.
5. Borough Councillor’s Annual Report –
Richard Blunt advised that planning can be an issue for everyone with new processes, rules & regulations etc. Consultations need relevant stakeholders including the IDB and Anglian Water. As Richard is on the Cabinet Planning Committee, he can listen to any issues we may have but Julian can say anything on applications. Both Julian and Richard can “call in” an application if requested where we may have issues with the application. Richard stressed that we should be supporting or objecting with comments, and we do this in a majority of cases. The Local Plan is moving forward, and the Gypsy & Traveller policy is an integral part of the plan and now at the consultation stage. The Wisbech Incinerator is on hold via DEFRA who are looking at the impact and requirement across the UK. The National Grid Grimsby to Walpole project is of great concern and why are they now using the existing pipeline under the Wash and then cables rather than pylons?
6. County Councillor’s reports – Cllr Kirk:
Julian is now on the Licencing Appeals Committee at Borough which looks at taxi drivers licensing. The Grimsby to Walpole project has both Liz Truss and James Wild objecting and Liz is seeking a meeting in Westminster with the new Energy Minister.

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Signed

Date

A shortage of school places has been raised and at the full County Council meeting earlier today, the dental issues were discussed with under 5's having serious dental problems. Malnutrition was also discussed. A dental school is to be set up and Julian hoping it will be in King's Lynn but probably go to the UEA. Concern that when students qualify, they will return to the cities.

The Gypsy & Traveller policy has caused a lot of anger with the removal of enforcements.

Flooding on Wheatley Bank continued and there is a land ownership issue along with new units being build which could have an affect regarding drainage. The ditch required cleaning out and is owned by Batemans Farms.

Awaiting an update on the dog kennels with many complaints now on the portal.

If we go for any enforcements, please copy both Richard and Julian on the request.
Station Road gritting – needs relaying and Julian will discuss with Jason at Highways.

Richard reminded that James Wild would like to attend a Parish Council meeting.

Cllr Dawson report read out by the Chair and will be appendix 1 and 2

7. No church report received

8. Village Hall report by Cllr Woolley:

The Hall has a hard working committee and volunteers. Funding for Solar panels and batteries has been received. The Coffee mornings are proving very popular with 150 attending recently.

9. Parishioners Open Forum – none

Meeting ended at 19.45pm