

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish of Saxtead held at
Saxtead School of Dance, Saxtead on Thursday 25 April 2013 at 19:30 under
the Chairmanship of Councillor George Cullingford**

Present: Parish Councillors: George Cullingford (Chair), Lisa Handley, Kate Hoare, Anita Beamish (from 7.46pm). Tony Hutt (Clerk). 8 members of the public: I Hammond, A Hurlock, E Abbott, H Elliott, V Speight, J Sullivan, J Speight, S Hartley. The meeting started at 7.33pm.

Apologies: Cllrs Kevin Davis, Graham Ward, Barry Mallion. Also PCSO Christian Hassler, Cllr C Hart (SCC), Cllr C Walter (SCDC); Parishioners L Harris, W Harris, L Yorke.

Approval of Minutes for Last Year's Parish Meeting

The minutes for last year's Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 25 April 2012 were approved and signed without amendment.

Matters arising from the Minutes

It was noted that the toilets on A1120 are apparently open every day now and Police would keep an eye on them. Cllr Hoare said there were a great deal of graffiti. The Clerk would contact SCDC (Mr Gallagher) to get it covered up as soon as possible.

Report by the Chairman of the Parish Council

The Chairman presented a written report (filed with these minutes). He mentioned the following verbally:

- The Diamond Jubilee celebration, which went very well.
- The Little Book of Saxtead (available from Sue on 621047, around £5), which is illustrated and runs to 80 pages; so far 50 have been printed but further runs can be done.
- As last year's litter pick only attracted four volunteers it was not proposed to have another this year.
- Cllr Ward continues to circulate Neighbourhood Watch reports, and Graham Read has replaced Gordon Heffer as his assistant. Another burglary had just been reported.
- Planning applications included a complete refurbishment at Four Winds; a new dwelling at Manor Cottage; extensions at Perry Cottage; and a barn conversion at Little Green Farm.
- His thanks to Louisa Yorke for her work with Wild About Saxtead
- His thanks to the two District Councillors and to Colin Hart, County Councillor, who was not standing in the forthcoming election.
- His thanks to his fellow Parish Councillors and to the Clerk, Tony Hutt, for dealing with the all the documents, finances and audit.

(Cllr Beamish arrived at this point)

Framlingham Community Centre Project

Mr J Speight presented an update on the plans for the Police House in Framlingham, on behalf of the Framlingham and District Development Trust. The project came about 2½ years ago when the Police announced they would move to next to the Fire Station and sell their site. Although planning permission was obtained to replace the police block and two houses by four new dwelling, concern from neighbouring organisations (Sports Club and playing field, Scouts and Guides, Pageant Field) was expressed that this was an important site to Framlingham and it was not a good site for housing because of noise, etc. In late 2011 the Mills Charity bought the site and offered it to the town for community facilities. The three organisations (including the Town Council for the Pageant Field) found the Framlingham and District Development Trust a suitable body able and willing to lead the project, chaired by Alison Garrett. By Christmas 2012 a concept plan was produced. Various small halls exist around Framlingham but the aim of the project was to create a facility as follows:-

- A 200 seat hall (with modular stage; 150 seated around 10 tables)
- Kitchen (school kitchens cannot be used when their halls are hired)
- Meeting rooms and facilities for youth
- Available for the whole day and the whole year (unlike schools)

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- Appropriate for surrounding villages as well

The concept plans included a sports hall for badminton, archery, carpet bowls, indoor tennis etc; a community hall; a youth facility serving Pageant Field, including toilets; and parking on land promised by the Sports Club. FDDT have taken plans to many organisations in Framlingham and around. They would like a bigger facility but funding constrains it to the proposed size. Parking allows for a one-way system to allow use of car parking on the Sports Club too. The site is owned by Mills Charity and is the only suitable site left in Framlingham for such a facility. It could have a first floor (offices, hall for a church, lift). In the next month funding bids will go to the Big Lottery Fund and the Sports Council; responses will determine what happens next. The Mills Charity offer expires in December 2013 (probably because the planning permission expires after three years).

Some questions followed:

Q: What is the timescale for hearing back?

A: *The Lottery has a four-step process, including initial eligibility (10 days), two rounds of assessment, then a final stage involving architects, surveyors etc.*

Q: Will the Mills Charity offer money?

A: *They are willing to support but no figure has been discussed.*

Q: Will anyone be able to park there?

A: *Possibly, if it doesn't affect the hall use.*

Mr Speight said the level of support so far had been over 90%. Since giving money back during the last project had been a nightmare they will not be doing that. Cllr Cullingford thanked Mr Speight and wished him good luck. The Parish Council will table the sending of a letter of support for the next Council Meeting.

Report from the Governors of Earl Soham CP School

A written report was received from Mr K Pearce, Head Teacher (filed with these minutes). The roll is currently 67 and numbers for reception in 2013/14 will be 13, which exceed the admission limit by one. This was seen by the meeting as a measure of success, in contrast to Framlingham's primary school.

Report from Suffolk County Councillor

No report was received.

Report from Suffolk Coastal District Councillors

A written report was received from Cllr C Walker (filed with these minutes). It was mainly about NHS issues including the Ambulance Service. He also sent a report about Radio Castle.

Report from Police (Safer Network Team)

PCSO 3034 Christian Hassler of Framlingham SNT had sent a written report (filed with these minutes). In it he reported that six crimes were reported in the preceding year 25/04/2012 to 25/04/2013, compared with 4 the previous year. There had been no crimes in Saxtead in the last two months to 24/4/13. Some staffing changes were detailed in the report.

Report from Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr Ward had sent a written report (filed with these minutes). Concerns included:

- Burglaries in Saxtead, Framlingham, Earl Soham, Brandeston, Kettleburgh and Dennington
- Potential scams by telephone
- Heating oil thefts

To obtain further information or to be placed on the mailing list for the electronic newsletters, please contact one of the following: Scheme coordinator Graham Ward, Telephone 01728 621047, Email graham.ward@uwclub.net; website www.saxtead.onesuffolk.net/local-information/neighbourhood-watch/.

Report from Saxtead Town Lands Trust

Mr M Sharman, Treasurer of the Saxtead Town Lands Trust, had sent a financial statement 31 Dec 2012 (filed with these minutes), as follows:

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- Net Income after expenses £1,728.
- Amount to All Saints' Church Saxtead for maintenance of the fabric £576.
- Welfare and other payments to 21 recipients - totalling £930.

One third of the income went to the church. Cllr Cullingford encouraged parishioners to contact the Trust if they knew anyone who might benefit, e.g. for books for university. Mrs P Sullivan is the secretary. Grants are usually given to a recipient once, but further requests would be considered.

Saxtead Green Management

Cllr Cullingford said there was not much to report on this issue, but the Parish Council were being pressured by SCDC with the ending of the Stewardship Agreement to take it over. What the Parish Council would be taking on in that scenario was not known. Relations with Pembroke College had also been bad. Tough bargaining was likely in future. The Parish Council do not want to be pushed into taking on the management in future if problems are foreseen; it has to be sensible and future councillors happy to continue with it in future. He was hoping for a full, round the table meeting soon with Natural England, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Pembroke College and SCDC. This has been requested but there is no date yet. The centre triangle will be cut again this year. SCDC have said that to give the hay cutting contractor more chance this year, hay may be cut earlier, while some flowers are still around, otherwise last year's trouble might be repeated.

Wild About Saxtead (conservation group)

Louisa Yorke had produced a report for the meeting but unfortunately this had not reached the Clerk and was not available for the meeting. The Clerk would send the report out when received, however. A verbal report was given by Cllr Beamish and Cllr Handley: a tea party was organised for **Friday 14 June**, 5-7pm, meeting by the goal posts. Stephen Massey will be leading a guided wild flower walk. Cllr Handley will ask Louisa Yorke to publicise it in Framfare. Over the winter some conservation work took place including half a day from SCDC, who took some trees out to give better access for hay cutting. Saplings and brambles are a problem. Cllr Cullingford thought the stacks of wood put around the perimeter from tree cutting might encourage undergrowth, but Cllr Beamish said the wood is mostly taken now. Cllr Cullingford felt the Green isn't opened up enough and used to be more open 20 years ago. Mr Sullivan commented that the old bursar (Gilbraith?) was adamant about cutting trees back. Cllr Beamish had discussed brambles with SWT but there was a conflict between SWT's wishes and what the village wants. Cllr Cullingford asked parishioners present for their views on this; there were favourable comments on clearance work on the Castle Mere at Framlingham, and general agreement about opening out on Saxtead Green.

Mrs Hartley said the fritillaries at Little Green were particularly good at present, near the back entrance of Foxearth Nursing Home.

Parish Council Finances as at 31 March 2013

The Clerk reported the finances of the Parish Council as at the end of the year (31 March 2013). The written report is filed with the minutes. Saxtead Parish Council ended the financial year with:

- £1,183.09 in the Community account (after allowing for cheques unrepresented)
- £294.63 in the Business Saver Account.

This means that the Parish starts the new financial year with reserves of **£1,477.72**. This represented 42% of the annual precept, which is the main income for the parish, and is outside the recommended reserve levels of between 50 and 100% of annual income but is not a cause for concern.

The Saxtead Amenities Fund has a total balance of £1,100.91 in the two accounts. This is not part of the Parish Council funds.

The Parish Council reviewed the budget for 2013/14 at the meeting on 13 Dec 2012 and agreed an unchanged precept of £3,500 for the year 2013/14. Although the precept is unchanged, the Clerk explained that following Localisation of Council Tax, in which the Government introduced a new system of Council Tax support (benefits) from April 2013, there was a risk that the Government's

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compensating grant passed on by SCDC to parish councils would not be available in the following year, with the result that achieving the same income to the Parish Council in 2014/15 would be seen by the Government as an increase in precept, with the possibility of a referendum being imposed under the Localism Act. He thought that risk was low, however.

The Parish accounts are being prepared for audit with a view to their being signed off at the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 23 May and then submitted for internal and external audit.

Cllr Cullingford explained that the Saxtead Amenities Fund was started because Saxtead Fête used to split funds between the village and the church, but the church took over the fête the Saxtead Amenities Fund was set up to receive monies from other events. The Parish Council were proposing to use it for the second seat, to be purchased in the 2013/14 FY for Saxtead Little Green. The Townlands Trust have agreed to give £200 for this. It was proposed by the Jubilee Committee.

In response to a question from a parishioner, Cllr Cullingford said the highest expenditure was on the clerk's salary; the grass cutting on the triangle was also a high part of expenditure. The hay cut was paid for by SCDC. A full breakdown would be given at the Annual Parish Council Meeting. Cllr Cullingford stressed the need for professional clerking, which Cllr Hudson (SCDC) had attacked in the East Anglian Daily Times earlier. The Clerk had sent a reply but unfortunately it was not published.

Questions from Parishioners

Q: Signs were creeping back on the Green, a big one recently appearing.

A: Cllr Beamish said she had been on holiday, and it was difficult to keep on top of them. She will inform Kenton Hall Weddings. Cllr Mallion is getting a quote for small signs prohibiting advertising.

Q: Can more draconian measures be taken?

A: This would be put on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

Q: A parishioner asked about the ditch on the Green filling up with water.

A: Cllr Cullingford said this was an on-going issue which the Parish Council were trying to get fixed and will keep trying. The water level should go down, and stops at the post box. There is a problem there but no one will take responsibility.

The meeting closed at 8.59pm.

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