

MOULTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting
20th May 2024

PRESENT: Parish councillors Mark Price (Vice Chair), Doug James, John Derry, Jane Horsnell, Richard Edge and Ryan Bragg.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (clerk), District Councillor Roger Dicker, David Unwin (Chairman of the Moulton Charity) and 3 members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from parish councillors David Almond, Tim James and Ed Chambers, County Councillor Andy Drummond, Jill and Jerry Goodwin (Moulton Village Hall) and Anne Collins (Moulton Wildlife Group).

The meeting was chaired by Cllr John Derry.

Reports are available on the Moulton website at <https://moulton.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/annual-parish-meeting/annual-parish-meeting-2024/>

1. Approval of the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2023.

The minutes of the meeting were confirmed and signed as correct by the Chairman.

2. Reports

a) County Councillor's report

County Councillor Andy Drummond sent a report which is available on the Parish Council website.

b) District Councillor's report.

District Councillor Roger Dicker gave his report.

The May 2023 District elections brought about a seismic change in the running of West Suffolk District Council. The new administration called the West Suffolk Working Partnership contains 19 Independent Councillors. 17 Labour, 1 Green and 1 Lib Dem.

The new Chairman of the Council is myself Roger Dicker. The new Leader of the Council is Cliff Waterman.

The new administration immediately worked on issues that were previously not considered important.

The 1st success was introducing the Decarbonisation Fund which would upgrade all Parish owned street lights to LED thus saving the Parishes thousands of pounds in new equipment and running costs. This was particularly advantageous for the villages in the old Forest Heath Area.

The Council has also introduced its new strategic priorities:

- Supporting thriving communities
- Sustainable growth
- Delivery of affordable, available and decent homes
- Environmental resilience

Further improvements introduced include the £200,000 investment for a better grass cutting regime after previous years appalling service. The decision not to use glyphosate may be overturned but any future use will be based on a targeted approach rather than large scale usage.

It has also been decided not to carry on with £60 million plus Bury St. Edmunds Leisure Centre whilst interest rates are currently so high.

The District portion (10%) of your Council tax bill has been set at a government advised 2.99% thus enabling a balanced budget for the next 2 years.

West Suffolk is coming towards the end of the new Local Plan process. All 3 stages have been consulted on and a final plan will be eventually presented to a government inspector for approval.

As of this moment there is still no decision regarding the huge Sunnica Solar Farm.

During this year the Council has obtained a number of government grants to invest in local services and helped many different community groups thrive through the cost of living issues.

I myself have helped various local groups with my locality budget including Gazeley children's play area, village newsletters and websites, supported village events, help fund speeding traffic equipment and signage.

The Community Chest Fund has been revamped to make it easier for smaller groups to access grants.

Once again I will have new a locality budget for this year so if I can help let me know.

In the 19 years I have represented the ward, without doubt this is the most excited I have been with this current administration.

c) Moulton Village Hall.

The village hall accounts have been uploaded onto the Moulton website as detailed above. Their income to 30th June 2023 was £28,482 and expenditure was £26,775.

d) Community Speedwatch report by Graham MacGregor.

The full report is available on the Moulton website.

The event in April to try and enlist more volunteers was a success and several more volunteers have joined the group. He thanked the Parish Council for supporting this event.

He has applied for two new sites in Newmarket Road and an additional site in Dalham Road near St Peter's Avenue.

The data from the VAS in Newmarket Road shows that over 50% of vehicles are exceeding the speed limit.

e) Moulton Panthers.

Mark McTrusty, Chairman of Moulton Panthers, sent his apologies and the following report after the meeting:

We are currently running three teams with around 34 children involved.

Each team has had a great season and gained so much more experience, although, no trophies this year I am afraid. Not for want of trying their hardest against some tough teams.

We are currently searching for more volunteers to help us run the club, coach, refs, fundraising planners etc.

I speak to Doug a lot and we now have a great rapport going. We are very appreciative of his time and dedication especially when he has had a tough year himself. So a massive thank you to Douglas and to Moulton PC for allowing more cutting to be done to accommodate the fixtures.

Our end of season 'do' is on the 5th June on the playing field. We would welcome anyone to pop over.

We hope to have been no trouble and would really like to continue through to the 24/25 season.

Another very big thank you to those who have supported our club and the teams. It doesn't go unnoticed.

f) Moulton Charity.

David Unwin presented the following report:

The past year has been a relatively quiet one for the Moulton Charity. Despite some upheaval for one of the tenants of the land, expected levels of rent have been received. Because the original charities that were merged are very old, the terms for distributing funds are very restrictive. The Trustees have made only modest distributions of income to qualifying beneficiaries during the year. Their focus continues to be on encouraging candidates for support to apply for assistance. Moulton residents are urged to assist with identifying such candidates. Applications and enquiries should be directed to the Rev Canon Chris Childs at Gazeley Vicarage, in the first instance. New posters have been prepared explaining about the charity and how to apply for assistance.

g) Moulton Wildlife Group.

The full report is available on the Moulton website. All their hard work is coming to fruition with things they have planted starting to grow, the hedge along the playing field has established itself, bird boxes have been put up with the help of Parish Councillor Tim James and a bird feeder on the playing field.

Volunteers are needed to support future projects.

h) Reverend Chris Childs (St Peter's Church).

No report was received.

3. Chairman's Report and Moulton Parish Council Financial Report.

These reports are available on the Moulton website.

4. Update on the Moulton Speeding Survey and the way forward.

90% of residents who responded believe there is a speeding problem in Moulton.

84% of residents who responded supported a 20mph speed limit near the primary school and village centre.

81% of residents who responded supported chicanes at the village entrances.

Key concerns were:

- The safety of Moulton Crossroads particularly with visibility at the junction of Bridge Street.
- Parking near the shop.
- Need for a crossing near the primary school as visibility is restricted on the bend where children cross in Chippenham Road to get to the school.
- The Tony Franklin legacy could be used to fund some of the work.
- Farm vehicles driving fast through the village.
- Need to install speed humps as well as chicanes.
- Dalham Road has an issue with speeding especially as there is no pavement.
- Lack of enforcement. More speed checks are needed.
- Parents queueing to drop off and pick up children at Moulton Primary School.
- Speed limits are only effective if they are enforced.
- One person would not support a 20mph limit because drivers don't stick to the 30mph limit.
- Consider extending the 20mph area to Brookside and Bridge St which are both narrow and have no or only a partial pavement.
- The problem of Sat Nav routing cars and lorries through villages.

The Parish Council will use this information and VAS data to draft a report to Suffolk County Council requesting traffic calming and a reduced speed limit in the areas detailed in the speed survey.

5. Any other village issues or concerns which residents would like to bring to the attention of the Council.

Question and comments from residents

An overgrown hedge in Gazeley Road. This needs to be reported to Suffolk County Council.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Signed Dated.....