

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on 15 April 2024

Attendance: There were a total of 30 parishioners and councillors in attendance.

- 1 **Welcome and introductions:** Cllr Christine Hamilton, Chair, welcomed those present to the annual meeting noting the impressive turnout.
- 2 **Apologies:** apologies previously received from Weeley Vet Centre
- 3 **Minutes of the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2023 published on the Parish Council website in advance of the meeting were agreed.
- 4 **Matters arising from the last meeting:** No matters raised.
- 5 **Report from the Chair, Councillor Christine Hamilton:** The Chair of the meeting presented her report, which is attached as an Appendix to the minutes.
- 6 **Reports from local organisations:** a representative of each of the organisations listed below provided brief verbal reports of the activities of their respective organisations. The Chair noted that Weeley is very lucky to have such a diverse range of voluntary organisations and hard working volunteers.

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| 1. | 1 st Weeley/Lt. Clacton Scout Group |
| 2. | Weeley Village Hall |
| 3. | St Andrew's Bowls Club |
| 4. | Weeley W.I. |
| 5. | Weeley Residents Association |
| 6. | Weeley in Bloom |
| 7. | Speedwatch Team |
| 8. | St Andrews Parish Church |
| 9. | Petanque Players |
| 10. | Petanque |
| 11. | Essex and Herts Air Ambulance |
| 12. | Weeley Walkers |
| 13. | TDC Cllr Peter Harris |
| 14. | ECC Cllr Dan Land |

- 7 **Presentation of the Weeley Community Recognition Awards:** The Chair invited Danny Botterell to introduce the awards ceremony noting that that this is the third year recognition of voluntary work have been made.

Cllr Botterell in delivering his commendation explained that Jenny and Fraser Beady have been running the village Speedwatch Team for a number of years, last year running 55 sessions in various locations around the village in all weathers. The voluntary work they do to help to educate motorists and act as a traffic calming mechanism in the village deserves the grateful thanks from residents. TDC Cllr Peter Harris was invited to present Jenny and Fraser with a certificate of appreciation.
- 8 **Questions and Answers:** No issues were raised and so, the Chair thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the meeting. She noted how impressed she is by the amount of largely unnoticed voluntary work that people offer to help to make Weeley such a lovely place to live. With that she closed the meeting and invited all those present to join her for refreshments.

Chairman's Report – Annual Parish Meeting

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for joining us at the 2024 village Annual Parish Meeting tonight.

As I'm sure you know by now the Annual Parish Meeting is hosted by the Parish Council on behalf of the village, and gives the opportunity for local community groups to share news of their achievements over the previous 12 months and details of any plans or projects they are working on which they would like to share.

Tonight's meeting will run along the same lines as previous years and once the agenda items have been covered, we will be announcing the names of those individuals or groups who have been nominated to receive a Certificate of Appreciation to recognise their contribution to improving the lives of the residents. This will be presented by our Ward Councillor, Peter Harris, after which we invite you to stay to enjoy some light refreshments with us.

As I have done previously, I would like to take this opportunity to underline the importance of the voluntary organisations in the village and the vital work they do. It is *these* organisations, and the residents who run them, more than anything else help to build cohesion within our community. They help provide people with direction and a sense of purpose - not to mention social activities. Weeley is truly blessed with a strong network of volunteers, and this helps to vastly improve the quality of life for residents.

I would like to thank Weeley Residents' Association for continuing to provide a wide variety of entertainment and activities, and Weeley in Bloom for their generous efforts for the community, by keeping the village and heath looking beautiful.

We must also thank Pearl and Derrick Byford for their dedication over many years to keeping St. Andrew's Church open and functioning. The work they do along with the rest of the PCC and the volunteers who clean the church and arrange the flowers should not be underestimated. If anyone would like to volunteer to help any of our local organisations, many of them are here this evening so please feel free to approach them to offer your services!

Thanks must also go to our Ward Councillor, Peter Harris and Essex County Councillor Dan Land for their help and guidance to the Parish which is always very much appreciated.

I want to thank our Vice Chair, Danny Botterell and fellow councillors Jenny Beady, Liz Fitzpatrick, Gilliane Foster, Kevin Green, Terry Spong, Vicky Cauvain and Kevin Millar. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Parish Clerk, Steve Gunter, who joined us in March. My personal thanks also goes to our outgoing Clerk, Kevin Harkin, for his hard work and support during his tenure. I am sure you will join me in wishing him all the very best in his retirement!

It's always interesting to reflect on achievements over the last 12 months, items which are still ongoing and our plans for the next year.

- As you will obviously be aware by now, the play area has been completely revamped with new apparatus for the younger children and extra equipment, including a zip wire, for the teenagers. This took rather longer to finish than we anticipated as work was severely hampered by the extremely wet weather we experienced during the first quarter of the year. We took the opportunity to plant some trees in and around the field and I think you'll agree that the area will look absolutely lovely once everything has 'greened up' so to speak.
- Our speed watch team headed up by Jenny and Fraser Beady is back in action after a bit of a hiatus because of weather and ill health over the winter months. Alongside potholes, speeding is high up on the list of residents' irritations. More volunteers would help share the load so if anyone is keen to help them fight this modern menace then I am sure Jenny and Fraser would be delighted to hear from you. Just an hour here and there by each volunteer is all that is required and would make a big difference.
- In December 2023, the Christmas tree lights were switched on by members of the Scouts and Beavers. Although it had rained all day, right on 4pm it stopped for us to be able to enjoy an hour or so of carol singing, hanging decorations and dedications on the tree, a visit by Mrs. Christmas and welcome hot food and drinks provided by Green Cow Catering. Boxes of chocolates generously provided by the Residents' Association were

distributed to the children. We will hold a similar event on December 1st this year at 4pm when the lights will be switched on with more carol singing etc. Please put the date in your diaries.

Our plans for 2024/25 include:

- The prickly subject of waste bins. We have a plan to install new bins, mostly in Weeley Heath which currently has a distinct lack of bins although there are many more residents with dogs these days. Our plan has had approval (some time ago) from TDC and we are awaiting a schedule of costs after which we can get on and install the bins. The litter pickers organised by Weeley in Bloom do a fantastic job in the fight against litter around the village, so a big thank you to them, and to all the other residents who fight a lone battle with litter in their own areas.
- We are in the throes of putting together a management plan under the guidance of Essex Wildlife Trust to ensure that we can better look after the Reed Pond area and be aware of what needs to be done, and when, to keep the pond healthy for the ducks and other wildlife which resides there.

I am sure there will be fresh challenges to face over the next 12 months and I encourage residents to come along to our monthly meetings to get involved with what is happening in and around the village and to raise any issues they feel need to be given airtime.

Thank you again for coming along this evening and if you can, please join us for some refreshments after this meeting.

Cllr Christine Hamilton
Chair, Weeley Parish Council