

Annual Parish Council Question Time 2023

24th May 2023 6-8pm in the Memorial Hall

14 members of the public were present, four parish councillors, district councillor and county councillor.



The Parish Council would like to thank all those who came along to the Question Time annual meeting of the parish. The aim was to assist the Parish Council in formulating priorities for the year ahead, to involve as many members of the community as possible and to share the successes and challenges the Parish Council encountered over the previous twelve months. Newly elected Mid-Suffolk District Councillor, Richard Winch, Green Party and Jessica Fleming, Suffolk County Councillor, Conservative Party attended to answer questions.

Parish Councillors found the discussion really useful with much to think about; concerns and possible solutions were discussed whilst all recognised the difficulties for local communities making their voices heard with some of the issues raised.

The concerns raised were:

- The **proposed large scale commercial development of land to the west of the A143 on the Shepherd's Grove estate** (the Jaynic development and now the potential for another alongside by Evolution) and the issues of further increased traffic including HGVs and vans both on the A143 and through local villages, and the loss of a rural landscape through inappropriate overdevelopment and air, light and water pollution.
- **Ever increasing volumes of traffic**, the pros and cons of parking on the streets in the centre of the village and the perception of cars driving too quickly

- **The impact of housing development on the village and its infrastructure**, including public transport; our neighbourhood plan and at what point it starts to carry weight in the planning process
- **Footpaths** were raised and the Chair of the Parish Council explained the difference between public paths and permissive paths and responsibilities for signage and cutting to keep paths clear
- **Ian Campbell invited people to visit the Sports Club** to see the development of a gym suite part funded by CIL seed funding from the Parish Council
- After questions, the **Chair of the Parish Council then delivered his annual report**

There were requests to be kept up to date with some of these issues. These are usually documented on the village website and also in the minutes of Parish Council minutes also published on the website and in The Observer. In order to further improve involvement and communication, all who wish to receive updates on specific issues are invited to contact the Parish Clerk and request their details be added to a parish council communications database. The database of names collected for Neighbourhood Plan communications will be updated and used to allow people to register their interest in communications on specific topics – these will be no more than one a month and considerably less when there are no major developments on planning issues of note.

Please watch out for further information on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan which once passed by referendum and adopted by Mid-Suffolk District Council will then have to be taken into account for each submitted planning application which means our voice carrying more weight in planning decisions.

Also, get involved in finding out more about the plans for Shepherd's Grove and make comments by writing to your MP, local councillors or commenting on the Mid-Suffolk District Council Planning Portal at the relevant time.