

## **Annual Parish Meeting: 8 April 2025 - Report of the Chair of the Parish Council**

We have held meetings in May, July, September and November 2024; and January and March 2025. Our meetings are typically on the second Tuesday of every other month but the dates are advertised on the Parish Council website.

At the Annual Parish Council meeting in May 2024 Cllr Andy Sharky was co-opted to the Council. It was agreed not to appoint a Vice-Chair. Attendance by councillors is always good and we have always had more than the three required to be quorate but over the last eight months we have had some illness and work commitments that have meant that two councillors had to give apologies - these were accepted. When apologies are not accepted that means there is cause for concern as to the reasons.

Work commitments were such that Sarah Cobbold resigned in January 2025. Sarah had added significantly to our meetings and we thanked her for her input. The vacancy was advertised by Mid Suffolk District Council. An election was not called so the Council could co-opt at the March meeting. Sue Smith had expressed an interest and attended the March meeting. Councillors were unanimous in their agreement to co-opt her.

The Finance Working Group was led by Julian Kearsley and included Paul Callow, Andy Sharky, myself and the Clerk. The budget was set and agreed at the meeting in January. The Budget report for the year 2025-2026 is on the website and in the papers for the meeting on 14 January. The precept was raised last year but not this year.

We have received regular reports from County and District Councillors and these, and papers for all our meetings, have been uploaded to the Village website.

Councillors represent the Parish Council on two village organisations - Cllr Roger Cross represents the Parish Council on the Village Hall Committee and Cllrs Bauly and Cobbold represent the Parish Council on the Tostock Poor's Charity. Cllr Andy Sharky is our Footpaths Officer and has recently reported on footpaths around the village.

Reports are posted on the village website and minutes of the meetings are also recorded on the website. The timing of the meetings means that it is not possible to include minutes of the meetings in the Chronicle for the next edition but I try to include a brief write-up in time for the publication deadline.

Our Parish Council meetings have a regular attendance from members of the public but the numbers are significantly reduced from two years ago. There have not been many planning applications to consider over this last year. Sometimes the deadlines are such that we relay our comments by e-mail to the Clerk and he responds on our behalf.

I would like to thank all my fellow councillors for their attendance and participation in the meetings and our Parish Clerk for his perseverance, good humour and reliably good counsel. I hope that we are now no longer regarded as 'toxic.'

Our challenges have been varied but I am glad to say that as a group of people we approach them with good intentions, mostly good humour and a determination to do what is best for Tostock.

Our Annual Parish Council Meeting is on 13 May and, as always, all are welcome.