

DRAFT MINUTES OF PAKENHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Held on Thursday, 16th May 2024 at 7pm in the Village Hall

Present: 18 members of the public attended
Mrs S Brown parish clerk took the minutes

The Chairman of the Parish Council Nick Davey welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Apologies:** No apologies received.
2. **To sign the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 18 May, 2023:** All present agreed that the minutes should be signed as a true record
3. **County Councillor's Report:** Councillor Hopfensperger was unable to attend the annual report had been received and the highlights for the year were read to the Meeting.
Borough Councillor Report: Councillor Andrew Speed attended and gave his annual report: "I have really enjoyed my first year in the beautiful villages of Pakenham, Troston and Livermere. Having previously been a Councillor in Bury St Edmunds, I have adjusted to the differing challenges and needs of a village community and spent much of the year focusing on issues such as planning and maintenance of highways. I have particularly enjoyed working alongside Pakenham Parish Councillors who work very hard and diligently to nurture and protect their village. At a District level, we were disappointed to see the administration withdraw the Western Way growth hub. In my opinion this is a big loss to the wider West Suffolk Community and has thrown in to jeopardy the location and siting of the historic records office. The current leisure pool facilities will remain outdated and in severe need of investment, and the eventual cost of the health and wellbeing space will only escalate. The challenges of road traffic continue - noise, speed and volume ! with over spill caused from the ever-busy A143. Whilst Councillor Becky Hopfensperger and I lobby to protect the village from heavy good vehicles, in particular, it is very difficult to have a tangible, enforceable impact on traffic flow. I was pleased to use some of my locality budget to support the sterling work of Paul Harris at the Pakenham Pavilion, enabling the installation of CCTV to support security over the new play area and facility. Overall, much time is spent engaging on planning applications, understanding the wishes of the applicant, whilst being mindful of the concerns of neighbouring residents. Often decisions are finely balanced and on one occasion this year matters became quite serious before we were able to enable a compromise at District Council to resolve the individual applicant's circumstances. Throughout the year I have been grateful for the support provided by the Clerk Sandra Brown, and I look forward to working with the Parish Council over the forthcoming year.
4. **Annual reports:**
 - **Allotments** – The Clerk to the Council advised all plots were currently rented with three on the waiting list as well as two allotment holders wishing to take on an extra plot. Rent of £220 received with £50 outstanding.
 - **Pakenham Charities** – The treasurer from Pakenham Charities was not able to attend a report had been received and was read to the meeting: Pakenham Charities for the Poor is one of three charitable trusts for the parish, originating in bequests dating from centuries ago. The income is derived from the rent and investments, plus one third of the income of the Pakenham Town Estate Trust. The remaining Town Estate Trust income is divided between the Church and the Education Trust. This report concerns only the Charities for the Poor. Income for the Charities for the Poor is used to make a small annual grant, intended under the trust deed for the purchase of fuel, to elderly, disabled, or disadvantaged residents. Grants are also made, on a one-off basis,

to individuals with particular needs, and to organisations of benefit to the residents of Pakenham parish. The trustees at the close of 2024 were the vicar, the Reverend Katherine Valentine (Chair), Mrs Marion Sargent and Mr Karl Scott as co-opted Trustees for the Charities for the Poor, Mr Cedric Palfrey and Mr Derek Dorling, representing the Parish Council and Ann Harrison and Martin Harrison, Churchwardens. The Charity Trustees have continued to advertise locally and online this year and have responded to a one-off request for grant funding during the year, resulting in a total of £250 awarded for specific assistance (in 2022 three one-off grants were made totalling £1,000). Advice is also made available on other local organisations to which residents may apply. The Charities were grateful to receive a gift of £100 to the Poores from a resident. Income to the Charities for the Poor, totalled £6,482 for the year to December 31st 2023. The annual allocation from the Town Estate was £5,500, with the remainder of the income received from investments, rents, bank interest and donations. There was also £2,618 in a savings account at the close of the year. The Pakenham Charities for the Poor Trustees met as usual in early December to decide on the main allocation of available funds. A total of £7,015 was allocated as charitable grants to individuals and organisations in 2023, with individuals benefitting from a total of £6,350. Ixworth Patients Association, the only organisation currently receiving assistance, was awarded £500. At the annual allocations meeting, the Trustees responded to further increases in investment income during 2023 by awarding an increased fuel grant of £200, a £15 increase over 2022. The same number of village residents, 28 in total, received fuel grants this year. The total cost of fuel grants was £5,600. In addition, five gifts of £100 were made to former Pakenham residents now in residential care. Ongoing monthly support continues for an alarm and monitoring system for one village resident. The total cost of supporting this system was £152 during 2023. Income received from wayleave is divided between the Charities for the Poor and the Town Estate, accounting for £13 paid annually to the Town Estate. A donation of £100 was received from a village resident. Administrative expenses were £275 in 2023. The Charities for the Poor responded to one individual appeal for assistance during 2023, totalling £250. Applicants are provided with contact details for the Spring Stanley Trust and other local charities, such as those distributing food parcels. As always, Pakenham residents are welcome to approach the clerk with requests by letter, telephone or email at any time during the year. All applications will be dealt with promptly and in strict confidence. Pakenham Charities for the Poor Accounts 2023-24 are attached to the minutes.

- **Pakenham Village Hall & Playing Field Association** – The Chair of the PVH & PFA attended and gave a report 2023 - 2024: The annual meeting had been held in April and gave an overview of the treasurer's report. The hall hire charges are been increased slightly, the wi-fi had been improved, the village café is going from strength to strength, please to have a new group, Marshall Arts, using the village hall on a regular basis, there is a new cleaner. Parking at the village hall had become an issue and new signs had been erected advising parking only for those using the village hall and this had helped matters. The autumn quiz was well attended and a number of grants/donations had been received and assistance had been given to the post office/shop to keep it going. Thanks to Paul Harris for his hard work submitting grant applications for the play area and now the pavilion. Thanks to those that had

given donations for the play area, picnic benches and towards the proposed new pavilion with drawing available to view. Goal posts had been renovated and the play area is now completed. There had been two instances of vandalism at the playing field and CCTV had been installed and thanks were given to Cllr Speed who provided some monies from his locality grant.

- **PCC: Churchwardens Report** – The Churchwardens were unable to attend but had sent through a report which was read to the meeting: Regular worship services have been held throughout the year, with St Mary's Church hosting the monthly family@church benefice service on the first Sunday of each month. Festival Services, - Harvest Festival, Christmas and Easter have also been held. The Deanery Service for the commissioning of Churchwardens was held at the Church. There were six funerals, one baptism and one wedding during the year. We continue to welcome the bellringers for their regular practice night on a Friday, and also for services and special events. We continue to operate the Food Bank and our thanks go to all those who make donations to this worthwhile cause. It has proved to be well used, and we have received positive comments from users, stating that it has proved a lifeline in difficult times. The Church remains open each and every day of the year, and many visitors come to explore its history or just to sit and enjoy the peace and tranquility. We are fortunate to have such a lovely building within our village, but the costs of maintaining it are increasing each year. This year we had our quinquennial inspection and have some minor works to carry out on top of the regular maintenance. Many people enjoy walking around the churchyard each day, and we try to manage it with wildlife and eco credentials in mind. We do receive many positive comments both on the Churchyard and the Church itself. During the last 12 months we benefited from some fund-raising activities, a coffee morning, outdoor theatre event, Bury Male Voice Choir concert and a donation from the Christmas Bazaar. We thank all those who support these events, or the Church itself through regular giving. We continue with our afternoon teas approximately every six weeks. These are very much enjoyed by those who attend and are open to everyone within the village. Food is also taken to anyone who is unable to attend and are happy to expand this if anyone else would benefit. We also hold a monthly coffee morning, on the first Thursday of each month, this provides both a warm space during the winter months, and a chance to meet and chat with friends old and new. Our thanks go to all who help in the church, flower arrangers, cleaners, PCC members, those who assist with teas and coffees and so much more. Keeping St Mary's Church open and financially stable relies so much on this support and we hope everyone within the village benefits from the presence of such a magnificent building. *Anne and Martin Harrison* (Churchwardens)
- **Threads** – A report was given: Threads is a weekly group that meets Wednesdays from 1.30 – 4.30pm for sewing, knitting and crochet. The group works well for all those who attend.
- **Tree Wardens Report** – A report was given by the Parish Council tree warden Cllr Derek Dorling: 2023 brought us to time for our 3 yearly H&S Survey for Trees growing on land which the Parish Council is responsible for the up keep of. They was carried out last Spring, and Safety Work arising was carried out during Winter 2023/24. This time round work was concentrated in the Parish Burial Ground and allotments, with none required in Church Green Wood or The Dell. M&TJs have ceased to do grass cutting, so we now have a new contractor Countryside Conservation & Tree Services, who we will call upon to carry out this and our day to day Professional Horticultural and Tree Work. We are extremely grateful to Graham Cranmer for carrying out monthly H&S walks round the Village, and to James Beatty & Partner Jenny who keep Church Green Wood looking splendid with the help of their Neighbours. The mixed hedge that I planted 3 years ago along the edge of the meadow in the Burial Ground is doing well, but still requires periodic weeding and any help would be gratefully appreciated. Last year I spent most of a day clearing Cleavers which had completely covered the hedge.

- **Village & Church Newsletter** – The Editor was unable to attend but had sent a report which was read to the meeting: May I first pass on my thanks to my wife Anne Harrison for distributing the magazine to the six villages within the benefice of Pakenham, and to the volunteers in Pakenham, Norton, Tostock, Great Ashfield, Hunston and Stowlangtoft. I would also like to thank the Community Workshop Limited of Bury St Edmunds for printing and sorting the magazine for collection. My thanks also go to Chris Carroll-Davis who has continued to produce the on-line version of the magazine. Eleven magazines were produced from 2023 – 2024 , with a combined edition for December and January. Advertising revenue has reduced slightly but advertising for local events has increased. Contributions from individuals in the six villages remain low and more articles would be welcome. Martin Harrison (Editor)
- **Women’s Institute** – The Women’s Institute report was given: I’m happy to report our members have enjoyed the pleasure of each other’s company and friendship throughout the last twelve months. We presently have 39 members. For eight of our twelve meetings each year we research speakers who can ring us insight into a wide variety of topics. We have had Suffolk Accident and Rescue who can give their fully qualified medical emergency help, wherever and whenever needed. A Forensic Scientist had us enthralled and shuddering too as she related some of her experiences. The scandal of food waste, modern maternity and neonatal car, etc. All speakers being s different to one another makes for lively discussion at the end of their presentation. For the other four meetings in the year, we kick off the New Year with a quiz and nibbles and a glass of something jolly. May month is our AGM when we elect our President and committee for this coming year. July is Garden Party time, and another reason to eat well and raise a glass to friendship and good company. Come December we have a Christmas meal to remember served by our wonderful Andrea. To close we are very pleased to confirm dear Pat Addington was re-elected as President for the coming year. Thank you - Marion Sargent (Secretary)
- **Parish Council Report** – The Chair gave a report: A warm welcome to everyone here this evening, thank you for coming. It’s been a year since taking the ‘chair’ on Pakenham Parish Council, not sure where that 12 months has gone, it’s flown past. For a relatively small village, it’s been a fairly busy 12 months. We have welcomed Thomas Berry as the newest parish councillor. Pakenham has had it’s fair share of planning applications, some straightforward & some not. The agenda has allowed us to discuss various topics, village traffic & parking issues. Sizewell C came up now & again as did the annual ‘Ixworth Kebab Van’ saga....which still carries on. The Fox pub goes from strength to strength with various programs during the year. We still have a pub & a Post Office in our village, long may that continue. The plans for the new Playing Fields Pavillon are ramping up & we all look forward to seeing the works start in the near future. The new play area is now all finished and working very well, special thanks to Paul Harris for his work with this. On a sad note, Pakenham Agri Centre ceased trading a few months ago, always a sad occasion when a village business ceases. Pakenham Parish Council has stepped into the modern world by using ‘online banking’. Santander Bank did their utmost to scupper those plans by losing vital paperwork, ignoring instructions, ignoring ‘us’ in general but perseverance came to the rescue, we can now quicken the payment of invoices & also check the status of accounts without waiting for a monthly statement. Last but not least, a big thank you to all the parish councillors that devote their free time to the wellbeing of Pakenham. I’ve said this before, their collective knowledge is invaluable & a great aid to the ‘chair’. A special thanks has to go to our Parish Clerk

Sandra, she is my rock, my "go to girl", a fountain of knowledge & without her I would be in the biggest muddle ever....thank you. Nick Davey Chairman.

Open Forum: A resident highlighted the well attended male voice choir at the church and they have arranged a number of musical events for over the next year.

5. Date of the next meeting: The date of the next meeting to be confirmed.

There being no further matters the meeting closed at 7.40 pm