

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF HOLYWELL-CUM-NEEDINGWORTH HELD ON TUESDAY

23rd APRIL 2013 AT 7.00PM AT MILLFIELDS

PRESENT:

Cllr M Williamson (Chairman)

12 Parish Councillors

3 members of the public

Miss J Bowd (Parish Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

None.

2. MINUTES OF THE 2012 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.

The Minutes of the 2012 Annual Meeting were signed as a true and correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

During the past year Cllr Mike Davison has resigned and Cllr Trevor Swales was unable to continue to attend meetings. Their places have been filled by the co-option of Cllrs Coral Norman and Andrew Whyte. The Chairman welcomed them formally to the Council.

Also we were very sad to note the death of John Gray who had previously served as Groundsman in the Parish and had been awarded many trophies in respect of his work. Our sincere sympathies remain with his widow, Eileen.

The last year, like the current one, has been full of challenges as the recession continues to bite and the Council has had to work hard to try to ensure that essential services are maintained while, at the same time, Council Tax is kept to an acceptable level. In January the Council set a precept of £100,600 which was a reduction on the 2012 figure. However, taking into account the revised tax base figure of 957, this has still resulted in a 2% increase for a Band D property. In line with other public authorities we face the continuing challenge of inflationary increases in many of our budget heads while we are steadily cutting back costs. We also have the on-going dilemma of reduced District and County expenditure each year where we need to reassess local priorities.

On a more positive note, the Council was pleased to become involved with the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II setting up an independent working party for this purpose that were responsible for the enjoyable Jubilee Celebrations locally. The Chairman thanked Cllr Jane Carter for her work in this respect. Fortuitously this also coincided with the official opening of the Storage extension of the Village Hall. The Event produced a small profit which will be used for the benefit of the Community. Partially funded by donation, the Council presented all the pupils at Holywell School with Souvenir Scrapbooks and Bookmarks as a memento of the occasion.

Also funded by donation, the Council now has its own Chairman's Badge of Office which has been specially designed for our Community.

Planning.

During the past year the Council has considered and made recommendations on 28 planning applications.

The introduction of the new Community Infrastructure Levy should see the Parish benefiting in the future but these are early days.

General Consultation.

The Council has a policy of looking at and responding to all the Consultation Documents they receive. They see this as an important part of what the Council is elected to do. This year our Consultation Committee has commented on a number of documents including:-

Ouse Washes: Landscape partnership

Draft community infrastructure levy

Sustainable communities act 2007

RECAP Waste management design guide

Local joint committees

Bearcroft Farm draft urban design framework

CCC local enforcement plan for minerals and waste development in Cambridgeshire.

Garden Plots

These are continuing to prove very popular and the Council currently has a waiting list of 5 although all are already plot holders who wish to either relocate or have a full size plot as and when they become available.

The Council continues to split the plots in half as they become available so that more residents can benefit. The Council is now being very strict with tenants and they are regularly inspecting the plots to ensure that conditions are adhered to and the plots are kept tidy. The annual 'best kept' plot judged as part of the annual garden show has also helped to raise standards

The Council continues to seek additional land to lease for use as garden plots.

Village Hall

Extension snagging is still to be completed including the fire doors but there are no further plans for future extensions at present. The lease with the Village Hall Trust will expire in 2015 and the Council has established a Premises Working Party to consider the best and most economical ways of managing the Hall and Millfields for the future. It is hoped that a decision will be taken by April 2014 to ensure no interruption of services.

Environment Committee

This Committee continues to be very active considering issues relating to the Garden Plots, Cemetery, Common Land, footpaths and our rural environment in general.

The redirection of FP2 and its upgrade to bridle path status has been discussed as a way of improving access to St Ives for village residents. The damaged footbridge on FP2 has recently been repaired but discussions about the route of this path are still ongoing..

Lock Up

The renovation work was completed at the beginning of 2012.

The repair work has made this structure good for many years to come and feedback received on its appearance has been complimentary

Emergency Plan.

This now requires a complete update and we would welcome volunteers to get involved.

Recreation Grounds.

This has been a difficult year for maintenance due to the adverse weather conditions- the grass just did not stop growing!

We have been finally successful in getting a revaluation of the Millfields site carried out resulting in a rebate of £10,000.

Plans are in hand to re fence the boundary and redecorate the pavilion at Millfields during 2013.

Joy riders continue to use the car parks for 'dough nutting' causing noise nuisance and surface damage. We are currently seeking solutions. The Police have become involved and some, at least, of the offenders have been identified. We hope that parents will support us in discouraging this anti-social habit, the costs of which are a further burden of the Council Tax.

Overcote car park has been resurfaced and new gravel laid.

New cargo netting on the climbing frame has been purchased due to petty vandalism.

Riverbank

Late 2012 it was noticed that the 2010 repairs to the riverbank outside of the Ferryboat were failing. The winter months has seen considerable flooding of the site and the state of the bank continues to deteriorate. The PC is currently seeking legal advice from NALC solicitors. Provision has been made in the 2013/14 budget to carry out further work should we be unable to obtain redress.

The School Bus

One pleasing piece of news during the year has been the new arrangements for the School Bus to St Ives. This has been a matter of concern for many years and long dispute with the County Council. Hopefully our young people now have a reasonable and safe alternative to get to St Ivo School.

As always I would like to record my sincere thanks to our clerk- Jane Bowd who is now becoming well established in her new role, Assistant Clerk - Helen Sirot-Smith, groundsmen -Ian Armstrong & Ricky Storr, cleaner - Lorraine Pearce, Tree Warden - Cathy Border and to all my fellow Councillors.

4. VILLAGE HALL TRUST REPORT.

Chairman of the Village Hall Trust – Roy Fountain delivered a report.

Open to Questions: No direct questions were raised however the Parish Council Chairman noted there were several comments in this report that appeared to be inaccurate and negative and that the Council would, almost certainly, wish to dispute. It was hoped that an amended version would be agreed by the Trust. A response would be prepared by the Council and, if no subsequent changes were made, would be added to the minutes for clarification.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

Miss Jane Bowd – the Clerk and RFO – presented the report based on year ending 31st March 2012.

Financial Report

Copy of Annual report is available which was distributed to all houses and incorporates a copy of the accounts.

Income – £126069

Expenditure – £95172

Precept £101000

£81871 left at end of year.

The income figure does include £16343 of grant funding relating to the village hall extension payment of invoices relating to the project did cross into next financial year.

Internal audit carried out by Steve Wilson for Canalbs Ltd - 12th June & 26th November.

External audit completed on 21st June 2012 by Moore Stephens- Unqualified Opinion.

Draft figures for year ending March 2013.

These have not yet been approved by council or audited.

Income £145895

Expenditure £139984

£87781 left

Precept - £101,514

Income figures do include rate rebate of £10186.39 for Millfields.

Annual Report will be published by 30th September 2013.

New external auditors appointed Littlejohn LLP

Precept current year 2013/14. £100600, plus grant from HDC of £3313 to offset effect of tax base changes.

Band D property increased by 2% at £105. 12pa

6. RELIEF IN NEED TRUST REPORT.

Year ending 31/3/13

Opening balance	£800.72
Interest	<u>£ 4.31</u>
	£805.03
Grant	<u>£200.00</u>
Balance 31/3/13	£605.03

1 grant of £200.00 made March 2013.

Trustees:

Michael Williamson

Margaret Perryman

Colin Pearce

Cathy Border

Jane Bowd (administrator)

Rev Sheila Anthony

7. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM.

There were no questions from the members of the public present.

The Parish Clerk read out an email from a resident who was concerned over lack of attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting and his perceived lack of engagement by the Parish Council with the local community.

It was reported that previous attempts to encourage attendance at the meeting, by additional paid advertisements, the provision of refreshments, speakers and presentations had met with very limited success and it could only be presumed that the community had no immediate concerns that had not already been dealt with.

It was also noted that the resident had never attended any previous meeting himself and was not attending this one despite having been specifically invited.

It was suggested that the Annual Parish Meeting for 2013 could be relocated to the Village Hall.

It was pointed out that all Parish Council meetings are open to the public and most residents are happy to use the public forum as a means of raising current issues rather than waiting for a formal Annual Meeting..

The Parish Clerk reported that low attendance at Annual Meetings was common across most parishes.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

Chairman

Date