

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF HORNINGTOFT HELD AT St. EDMUND'S CHURCH ON TUESDAY 11TH MARCH 2014 AT 7.00 P.M.

Present: Councillor A Hill (Chair)
Councillor T Hawke
Councillor I Baker
Councillor P Chapman
Councillor G Drew

County Councillor M Kiddle Morris

3 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence.

District Councillor T Carter had forwarded his apologies.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

Councillor Chapman proposed and Councillor Hill seconded the resolution the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2013 be approved. All were in favour.

3. County Councillor Report.

The County Councillor presented his report..

The election of Councillors for a new 4 year term took place in May 2013, since then there has been one bye election (in Thetford) where the UKIP Councillor had resigned; the Division was won by the Labour candidate. Last week (28th February) a Labour Councillor resigned from the Labour group and is to remain as an Independent. The current state of the parties at County Hall is now as follows:

Conservative	40
Green Party	4
Independent	2
Labour	14
Lib/Dem	10
UKIP	14

At the Council meeting immediately after the May election it was proposed that the Council investigate the possibility of moving from the strong leader and cabinet system of governance to a committee system. There are various models that can be adopted under the committee system and this has been discussed at length by the parties. An Extraordinary Council meeting will be held on the 28th April to debate the way forward.

The grant that central government distributes annually to all Councils has been reduced over the last 3 years and will be reduced further in future years; the previous administration made savings of £135m but there are still more savings required over the next 3 years and these amount to £189m. Government funding cuts of £91m and rising demand for vital services account for the shortfall. Despite this the Council agreed on 17th February to freeze Council Tax for this year and to restore £7.1m to the budget as a result of the "Putting People First" consultation which ended on the 12th December 2013. (£3.1m to consolidate the Safeguarding Children programme; £1m to delay changes to post 16 transport for a year; £3m to restore the well-being element of adult social care personal budgets).

The flood of December 5th 2013 caused by a tidal surge did some damage to private property and to some coastal flood defences, but the defences put in place since the 1953 prevented the devastation and the deaths seen in that year.

Norfolk has not suffered as much from the extremely wet January and February as other parts of the country and the very low temperatures experienced over the last 4 years have not been evident. Winter highway maintenance (ie gritting) has not been necessary to the same level as

in previous years. Potholes have of course appeared as usual but not in the same quantity and consequently have been temporarily filled in short order. The highways maintenance budget has been cut by £1m for next year 2014/15 and it remains to be seen if there is sufficient funding in the budget to cope with another severe winter.

The "Better Broadband for Norfolk" contract managed by BT and funded by the County Council and central Government will enable the majority of Norfolk homes and businesses to enjoy better broadband speeds by installing "fibre to box" and other technologies. The Tittleshall exchange, which serves Litcham, is currently having fibre optic cables laid to the villages it serves and the Better Broadband website indicates that superfast broadband is "coming soon" although there is no definite date quoted for completion.

4. District Councillors Report.

District Councillor Carter had forwarded his report which was read out..

Annual Report to Parish Councils

Yet another challenging year for District Councils and Breckland as last year has not been spared the pain of Government spending cuts. The Government grant for Breckland has been reduced by 25%, despite these cuts, however, Breckland has been able to freeze the level of Council Tax and maintain front-line services.

However, savings have had to be made and those of you who remember the 'Could We – Should We'? Public Consultation carried out last year can recall that 'Voice' and Pest Control were suggested by you as areas where savings could be made. As a result, Breckland have removed these services at a saving in the region of £100.00. However, further discussion needs to take place on how Breckland might go about reducing costs next year in order to meet further reductions in Government funding. No doubt we shall hear more about this in the coming months.

After a great deal of ambiguity from Central Government, that created much uncertainty between Breckland and the Town/Parish Councils, the issue of Parish/Town Council Tax Relief was eventually sorted out and will be paid. Breckland, along with many other District Councils, found themselves caught up in a situation that was not of their making, yet which they were being blamed for. It must be noted, however, that Norfolk County Council is refusing to contribute its share of the Government Grant, amounting to approx £60,000.

For those Parishes who attended the recent Town and Parish Forum held at Watton, where a presentation was given by Breckland on its plans for regeneration and development over the next 15-20 years, the idea of a LabV was introduced. Basically a LabV is the coming together of a local authority with Private Sector Developers, as a company, to assist in the development and regeneration of land assets identified from the Assets Register. Since the meeting a great deal of positive feedback has been received and a number of reservations regarding the impact on villages made at the meeting have been addressed.

As Ward Representative I regularly attend and contribute to Parish Council Meetings and deal with any issues arising as quickly and effectively as I can. I also carry out regular sweeps of roads in the Ward to report Fly Tipping and have it removed, and also to deal with other issues that have been reported to me.

As a Breckland Councillor I am privileged to hold a number of positions of responsibility: I am the Executive Support Member for Planning, Building Control and Housing.

As Chairman of the Member Development Panel I have responsibility, along with the Member Trainer, for the quality and delivery of Councillor Training within the Council and Parishes. The work carried out by the Panel has been instrumental in Breckland being awarded the East of England Employers Charter Plus award. Breckland are one of only two councils to have achieved this award in East Anglia and one of only 13 councils who have the award in the whole country.

I currently hold the position of Vice Chairman on the General Purposes Committee and am also a member of the Planning Committee.

I represent Breckland on the County Council NHS Champions Panel.

Alongside the strategic work carried out by Breckland has been the great work carried out by the Communications Team in keeping the Ward informed of the many events and activities taking place.

We have had:

Parishes winning grants for play equipment, improvements to Village Hall facilities, playing fields and Memorials.

Dance classes for all ages.

Bursaries for aspiring sports coaches

Half-term activities for young people.

Reduced fees in Sports Centres

Free Keep Fit Classes.

A course for aspiring gardeners

Recreation grants for sports equipment

Breckland Book Fest

Grants of up to £500 for village activities regarding Anniversary of WW1.

I commend this report to the Parish Council.

Trevor Carter

District Councillor for Hermitage Ward.

5. **Chairman's Report.**

The Chairman presented his report.

Planning:

Olsted Yard, Brisley Rd., minor material amendment to car port, one bay to have secure doors. Permission.

Instillation of wind turbine at Kilima Farm. Refused

Tuttle Farm, Back Lane, single storey extension. Permission.

Dudgeon Wind Farm, minor amendments to cable route.

Olsted Yard, Brisley Rd., extend roof to form link between dwelling and garage. Permission.

Septic tank that has been situated by the source of the River Wensum being investigated by the Environment Agency.

Highways:

Flooding on B1146, meeting with Highways Engineer to inspect ditches and culverts on B1146 and School Rd. Brisley.

Subsidence on Oxwick Rd., some patching has been done although the feeling is more needs to be done.

It was requested that trees near the junction of School Rd., Brisley, on the B1146 be cut back.

Concern at the speed of tractors towing Colman's trailers passing through village.

Sam 2 sign purchased in conjunction with other local parishes and has been in position in Brisley Rd. Horningtoft.

Finance:

Precept set at £2000.

General:

Annual risk assessment found no problems.

The Chairman and Clerk attended Town and Parish forum meetings.

Broadband and WI Spire: Stuart Cleverley reported on a meeting he had attended aiming to improve Broadband in Norfolk. A presentation was made by a supplier of WI Spire Broadband which is being installed in Whissonsett and Colkirk churches.

John Drew and Maurice Reeder, with help from David Bunning and Ross Harris refurbished and re-erected the village sign. In the meantime trees overhanging the sign has been cut back.

Thanks to County Councillors Mark Kiddle Morris, District Councillor Trevor Carter and Clerk Bryan Leigh.

6. Homewatch Report.

The Clerk reported that the Safer Neighbourhood Action meetings took place every month. There has been little crime to report in Horningtoft for the preceding year. There has been no new information concerning Homewatch schemes for the past year.

7. Charity Trustees Report.

Councillor Chapman presented the report.

Horningtoft Eleemosynary Charity

Financial Year End 31 March 2013

Gross Income £ 236

Gross Expenditure £ 195

Balance carried forward £ 431.11

The trustees remain the same and are Pauline Chapman, Heather Gooch and Liz Logan and all have signed declarations of acceptance and willingness to act as trustees for the charity.

In the year ending March 2013 we made awards to three residents and this year to date we have helped two residents, however we still have funds available. Another application has been received but the family has not lived in the village for the required 12 months so I have asked them to reapply later this year.

Please remember, anyone who needs some extra help or knows of someone else in the village who does, they are encouraged to approach either Pauline Chapman, Heather Gooch or Liz Logan.

8. Parochial Church Council Report.

Mr Cleverley presented the report from Anne Cleverley.

The quotas for the benefice have been increased from £42000 to £52000 for the next three years. At a meeting of all Treasurers and Church Wardens I managed to get our quota for the year down from £4000 to £3500. This is still an extraordinary amount to find from a small congregation and small village. This means we have to pay £250 per month for 10 months plus our insurance is now £1000 per year. David O'Neill has said he will be our treasurer for the next year unless there is someone who would like to take it on more permanently. I shall be retiring this March as a Churchwarden. Last year Doreen Richardson, newcomers to the village, introduced us to quizzing and a successful quiz night was held. The Christmas Bazaar went well but we do need younger people to take it on this year. Olive's Sunday Teas were a great success. The Bonus Ball is our big money maker each year-Olive says there may be one number left- so lets sell it. The Quinquenium took place with one or two major concerns-the bell pole across the tower that holds the bell is now unsafe- so this is to be dealt with- until then no bell ringing! Repointing also at the south end of the church are the plans for this year. We must raise some money so we have made dates and have decided on future events:- Beetle Drive, Afternoon Teas at Olives, Occupations exhibition in the church incorporating World War 1, Tug of War 7th September, Quiz, Christmas Bazaar 15th November and possibly a bring and share Harvest Supper. Horningtoft will still have 2 services a month. I must thank all church cleaners and flower arrangers-we could do with a few more- and especially Gordon who keeps our path to the church looking so nice.

9. Heritage Society Report.

Councillor Chapman presented the report.

The Heritage Society would like to thank the Parish Council for paying the costs of hosting the Village web site and we hope that they will continue to do so. Unfortunately the company that host our website has failed us and the website has not been available for the last two weeks, I am in the process of acquiring a new reliable host.

Enquiries continued to come in via the web site, and the visitors' book in the church. Heather has been helping village residents research their family history as well as people with family connections to Horningtoft.

2013 was a quiet year for the Society but this coming year we will be busy, as you all know it is the one hundredth anniversary of the start of the First World War on 4th August 1914. We are planning an event this July to commemorate the efforts of the residents of Horningtoft during the war at home and in military service. We intend to gather information from the 1911 census as a starting point. This census has not been available for previous exhibitions we have put on so there will be new lines of research we can cover. I'm looking into obtaining grants from BDC and the Heritage Lottery Fund to help with costs. We plan to hold an information gathering day soon to start the project. We would like anyone with photos, medals, memorabilia relating to the First World War and their family occupations in the early 1900s. We will be interested in any information, old deeds, photo's etc relating to the village around this time and ask everyone to please find out what your family may know. We can either photograph or scan and return items quickly to the owners.

10. Any Other Business.

There was no other business raised at the meeting.

The meeting closed at 1940