

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF HORNINGTOFT HELD AT St. EDMUND'S CHURCH ON TUESDAY 8TH MARCH 2016 AT 7.00 P.M.

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

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Hawke and Chapman, Heather Gooch and District Councillor T Carter.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

Councillor Drew proposed and Councillor Hawke seconded the resolution the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2015 be approved. All were in favour.

3. County Councillor Report.

The Clerk presented his report.

County Councillor for Necton and Launditch
Report for 2015 – 2016

On the 22nd February at a meeting of the Council the Council Tax for the financial year 2016/17 was raised by 3.99%. The decision was made by a cross party majority of councillors, a rise of 1.99% in the general Council Tax will see the proposed cuts to some services restored; no fire stations will be closed; libraries will remain open; cuts to the Museum and Record Office Services will not go ahead and an extra £1.5m will be put into the road maintenance budget next year to tackle potholes. Government has sanctioned an extra Council tax rise of 2% for those councils with a deficit in their adult social care budget caused by a rapidly ageing population. The Council decided to raise this extra revenue as the current annual deficit in the adult social care budget is in excess of £5.5m. The tax raised will be ring fenced for adult social care.

The Council still has to find savings over the next 3 years of around £111m and has to address overspends in the 2015/16 budget. Future savings will be achieved by making the council more efficient however overspend this year will largely be met by use of reserves; council tax rises similar to that passed for next year are not ruled out for future years by the current administration. Indeed it is the intention of the Government to make councils self funding and Norfolk's revenue from council tax is one of the lowest in the country.

The past year has seen some by-elections and some other changes, a Conservative councillor decided to become non-aligned and the Conservatives won 2 out of 3 by elections. The current state of the parties is; Conservatives 41; Green Party 4; Labour 14; Liberal Democrats 10; Non-Aligned 2; UKIP and Independent 13. There are a total of 84 seats on the Council.

Last July 2015 OFSTED inspected Norfolk County Councils Children's Services and in October a report was received which indicated that the service that progresses those children in care towards permanently leaving care was "inadequate". The report made 19 recommendations which have been addressed through an action plan which has been approved by OFSTED. Additionally, in January this year, a Commissioner was appointed by Government to oversee the improvement required and to report by April what progress is being made. I sit on the Children's Services Committee and am sure that the action plan put in place will address the concerns highlighted by OFSTED.

I have mentioned previously the Norfolk has the largest ageing population, especially between the ages of 70 and 85 and this is putting strain on the adult social care budget. There is however another demographic which is causing concern; there is a mini "baby boom" which will hit school age this September and continue for the next 2 years. The schools capital budget is under immense pressure to provide the extra classrooms required to accommodate the new pupils.

Allied to the above, in a way, is the pressure that will be put on small rural schools by the Government's desire to have all schools become academies by 2020. Whilst small schools may "cluster" together to form academies my concern is that financial pressure may force some smaller schools within the cluster to close to concentrate pupils under one roof. (Note; a viable primary school is 250+ pupils).

There are undoubted challenges ahead for local government in general and more so for large rural counties such as Norfolk and I suspect that the year ahead will see the beginning of radical changes in the way local government delivers services to local communities. I will of course endeavour to present the views of the people that I represent on the Council and welcome any contact from you raising concerns or questions.

Mark Kiddle-Morris

4. District Councillors Report.

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

Hermitage Ward District Councillor's Report 2015/2016

Government Funding for councils

Central Government has continued to reduce funding to local authorities – as a result at the last budget 2014/15 Breckland had to find savings in the region of 3 million pounds over the next 3-5 years.

It is really pleasing to report that through good housekeeping Breckland is able to not only present a balanced budget for 2015/2016, with no increase in Council Tax and more importantly no reduction in services, but also seek by 2020 to remove dependency on Government funding completely.

It is also significant that although the number of people working for the council has reduced by more than a quarter, through the reorganisation and regeneration programmes and the introduction of new ways of working, the council has been able to make a significant improvement in productivity.

It is this 'More for Less' approach that that other councils are starting to copy.

Breckland – Maintaining services and reducing costs

It is imperative that Breckland Council continues to maintain a dialogue with residents regarding what they consider important to them. At a number of events, especially the Town and Parish forums, residents have been able to give their views on a wide range of topics.

High on the list was keeping parking in Breckland free and seeking to freeze Council Tax and yet still maintain, and in some cases, improve the service being offered. As a result of the freeze in tax the annual rate of tax for a Band D property is still £69.03, but as only approx 12% of properties in Breckland are Band D the majority of residents pay much less.

As far as Council Tax is concerned Breckland, through, once again, maintaining prudent housekeeping, Breckland Council froze Council Tax and still has the lowest tax in the country by far – mostly half of that charged by other authorities.

Shared Services

Breckland remained with South Holland to share services and Chief Executive. The shared services are saving each council thousands of pounds and are enabling them to move forward with improvements in services, and development in housing, retail, and small business units.

Community Funding

The Council has introduced a range of new Pride in Breckland grants and an increasing number of groups are applying for funding on a wide variety of projects. Recent funding projects include 'Bin it for Good' seeking to reduce the amount of litter discarded on our streets and recreational areas.

The most recent scheme has introduced grants of up to £200 for Community groups to carry out

activities of their choice to celebrate the Queen's Birthday. Look on our website to see what other grant opportunities are on offer and how to apply.

The Local Plan and Partnership Working

The Council has entered into partnership with a private development company to deal with the desperate housing shortage in our region, as well as helping local companies with premises. The initial work is being carried out in Thetford as part of the regeneration of Riverside, but along with this a number of houses are in the process of being built in Mileham, and Attleborough. It is anticipated that a rolling programme of housing development will continue on a variety of council owned land in consultation with local residents. During recent months Breckland has produced a new Local Plan which has gone out to all Parish and Town Councils for consultation. The new plan will cover the period 2016-2034 and will outline how the Council will seek to meet the Governments annual housing targets during this period.

At district level Breckland has to establish how many jobs and homes need to be provided in the authority up to 2034. At appropriate stages the council is required to consult on the plan with parish and town councils and the public. Early indications are that up to 12,000 new jobs may need to be provided. Also up to 24,400 new homes may need to be provided. This figure included some 3,732 homes already built, as the plan covers the period from 2006. The figure also includes a further 7,178 homes, for which planning permission has already been given since 2006. Up to a further 13,300 homes may need to be provided making a total of 24,400. I emphasise the word "may" as the plan is still being updated due to recent changes in legislation.

At Parish level Councils have been encouraged to start preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, Local Plan, Village Appraisal – whatever residents feel they want to engage in. These plans will involve local communities in planning for their future development. When a plan is in place, subject to conforming to national policies, it will become part of the District Plan; then planning decisions relating to that parish will have to be made in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan. An alternative to this is a local development order which allows a parish to grant planning permission to specific sites.

Waste and Recycling

During the year the Council introduced a new waste programme with recycling at its centre. After some initial teething problems the programme is going well and proving to be a success. The new equipment at the Recycling Centres offers residents a greater number of recycling options. It is, however, important that residents take greater care what they place in their Black recycling bin. Remember – no food waste, no black bin bags or other plastic bags, no wood, no material, clothing or shoes. If any of these are present in your bin on collection day it will not be emptied.

Breckland Supported Community Activities

Despite the difficult times Breckland has sought to extend and develop various activities and events for residents and young people. These have included: Dancing at Litcham High School, Badminton for over 60s at Dereham Leisure Centre, and also at Swaffham. Netball at Swaffham, Nordic Walking at Watton Sports Centre, Riding at Eden Meadows Riding School and Middle Harling, Indoor Bowls at The Brick Indoor Bowls Club, Swimming lessons at Eccles Hall School, Indoor Cricket at Dereham, Archery at Garboldisham, plus various group walks throughout the county. Arts activities have included Poetry events, Breckland Arts Trail, and Breckland Book Festival.

Internet – Better Broadband for Norfolk Programme.

Breckland have put a further £1m into the current Broadband Rollout Program to further improve the quality of Broadband in our District. This is primarily aimed at improving Broadband for residents and those villages and businesses that are at present unable to receive an acceptable Broadband signal. The Council is continuing to help finance turning 'Not Spots' into 'Hot Spots' and is prepared to put even more money into the BT scheme and is also seeking alternative options for those residents and businesses that still face problems.

The Big Switch – Collective Switching Scheme (for Gas and Electricity).

This is an initiative in which County and District councils have joined forces to reduce primary fuel costs for the people of Norfolk. Almost 10,000, signed up, 2,800 from Breckland, and the average saving per customer was in the region of £115. The opportunity to join the Switch and Save scheme has again been offered and almost 1,600 residents throughout the district have signed up.

Boundary Review

As residents may be aware there is to be a review relating to the number of MPs – the current number is 650 but the government want it to be reduced to 600. Norfolk will probably lose 1 MP.

The Commission have accepted the case presented by Breckland Council and have reduced the number of councillors by 4 and adjusted the number of councillors representing certain wards. Furthermore, by now most residents are well aware that the Boundary Commission has added Mileham to Hermitage Ward. As a result the population of the Ward is now in the region of 2,200. – an increase of 12%.

What I've been up to

As your District Councillor I have been working hard supporting residents and Parishes in the Ward and dealing with various issues that have arisen during the year. Examples are listed below:

Identifying and dealing with instances of illegal fly-tipping.

Identifying and reporting cases of ignoring/breaking local planning rules.

Reporting and monitoring cases of vermin infestations.

Helping speed up and resolve a number of planning issues.

Giving help and advice to residents on a variety of issues.

Supporting Parishes and village groups in grant applications.

Gaining help from the Council for residents in need.

Working with enforcement to deal with issues of concern to residents.

Regularly attending and reporting to Parish meetings.

Dealing with issues and concerns raised by Parishes.

Supported village functions and Coffee Mornings.

Visiting villages during weekends – meeting and greeting residents.

96% attendance at Breckland Council meetings and committees where I am a member or Chairman, plus other committees out of interest as part of my role as Executive Member for Place.

Attended 90% of training opportunities, plus 2 day weekend sessions at Warwick and Cambridge.

For 2016/2017

As residents of the Ward are already aware I am readily available on the phone, respond quickly to emails and am reliable in dealing with issues. I am however; keen to explore other opportunities to improve my effectiveness as a Councillor.

As I mentioned in my last report it is my intention to approach editors of the various Parish Magazines to see if I can include a regular article updating and informing residents of what is happening in their area. I have also held a number of on-line surgery utilising Direct Messaging, Facetime and Skype where residents can have an opportunity to ask questions and voice their concerns. I must admit, however, that this has not been as successful as I might have wished, but it is my intention to try it again during the coming months.

My priorities are still:

1. To help people who need care or protection and have no one else to provide it.
2. To achieve best value for money and balance the books.
3. To help bring new jobs and future prosperity.
4. To build more homes to meet increasing demand for people to reside in their local area.

Trevor Carter

Ward Member for Hermitage Ward

5. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman presented his report.

Chairman's Annual Parish Meeting Report 2016

Planning

- Church Farm, Oxwick Rd. Application to construct farm office, mess facilities and potting shed. Permission granted.

- Oakdene, Whissonsett Rd. Request to remove agricultural occupancy condition. Refused.
- Land to rear of 2 Church Rd. 20mx40m menage area. Permission granted.
- Olsted Yard, Brisley Rd. Application to construct ground floor single storey extension. Permission granted.
- Church Farm, Oxwick Rd. Revised application for 2 holiday cottages. Permission granted.
- Ivy Farm, Thumb Lane. Application to build single storey extension to rear, change of use of land to domestic garden and erect triple bay garage. Permission granted.

Highways

- Road closure on Whissonsett Rd to repair a burst water main.
- The Highway Community Rangers have in the course of the year: cleaned out blocked gulleys, swept road junctions and conducted a litter pick along the Brisley Rd.
- The Oxwick Rd was closed in September to allow installation of cables for Dudgeon Offshore.
- Ongoing problems with flooding outside Sycamore House despite efforts to clear drain from roadside.
- County Councillor Mark Kiddle-Morris backed calls by parishioners for a 50 mph speed limit on the Fakenham Road – this is being considered by the Highways engineer.
- The footpath from Thumb Lane FP4 is being added to the definitive map.

Finance

- The external auditor queried the size of the reserves held by the Parish Council so the Precept was reduced to £1750 which will be the same for the coming year.

General

- The Parish Council helped fund the felling and clearing of the two pine trees by the church porch. Thanks to Councillor Drew for organising the work.
- The notice board by the church crossroads is now only for Parish Council information. Boards at Thumb Lane and in the Bus Shelter are for general use.
- Some problems were encountered with grass cutting in the church yard i.e cutting the wrong areas. This situation was rectified during the summer.
- Thanks to Councillor Chapman for her ongoing work trying to establish better Broadband connections for Horningtoft.
- The Horningtoft Heritage Society organised a village tidy up 4-6th March this year. They are also organising a celebration on the 23rd April for the Queen's birthday. On June 25/26th an event will be held in the church and churchyard focusing on the history of the church at the time the tower fell down. Many thanks to Councillor Chapman and Heather Gooch for organising all the above.
- Thanks to all those villagers and friends who have helped during the course of the year and to the Councillors for their attendance and support of meetings. Likewise to County Councillor Mark Kiddle Morris and District Councillor Trevor Carter for their time and support and finally Parish Clerk Bryan Lee for his all hard work and advice.

6. Charity Trustees Report.

Councillor Chapman presented the report.

Horningtoft Eleemosynary Charity

Charity Trustees Report for Horningtoft Parish Meeting 2016

Financial Year End 31 March 2015
Gross Income £ 242
Gross Expenditure £ Nil
Balance carried forward £ 700-88

In the year ending March 2015 we made no awards and this year to date we have not had any request for assistance and not made any donations. So please everyone, try and think of anyone who may need some extra help or has medical expenses, travel costs, high heating bills or similar, then tell us. This money is for Horningtoft residents who have lived in the village for twelve months and we need to use it.

The trustees remain the same and are Pauline Chapman, Heather Gooch and Liz Logan. Please contact any one of us with any suggestions of who can benefit from these funds.

7. Parochial Church Council Report.

Councillor Hill presented the report.

We have had a busy year raising money to keep the church going, but with lots of help managed to pay the quota of £3200 and have money to do repairs. The pine trees with help from the Parish council, new side gate put in, bell cote repaired, new LED lights at the back of the church.

This year we will have to have repairs done to the organ, this being sorted after Easter. The fund raising was afternoon teas, dog show, rounders match, harvest supper and quiz, Christmas bazaar and Bonus ball all a great success..

Our two 8.30a.m. services have been going well attended ranging from 8 to 12, we are very fortunate to have Rev. Robin, and Richard and Wendy to play the organ.

The AGM is on 17 March at 7.00p.m. in the church and it would be good to see more people attend, all are welcome.

Afternoon Tea is on Sunday 15 May at Brancaster House at 2.30 p.m.

8. Heritage Society Report.

Councillor Chapman presented the report.

Horningtoft Heritage Society Report

for Horningtoft Parish Meeting March 2016

The Heritage Society would like to thank the Parish Council for paying the costs of hosting the Village web site. The hosting is now held by LCN at a cost of £55-08 for two years. Domain name cost is £14-50 for 5 years, renewal not due until April 2019.

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.



2015 was a quiet year for the Society, however this year has already seen a "Clean for the Queen" weekend. The Society received a grant from Breckland Council for £200 to cover the cost of the clean up and to arrange a celebration. Twenty residents helped by litter picking along the verges, cleaning village signs, cleaning inside the church, cleaning the font and tidying up the church yard. My grateful thanks to all who volunteered, especially those who came on Saturday,

when the weather was very bad.



The celebration will take place on Saturday 23rd April, from 10:00am, here in the church. Food, drink and activities will be provided for free. A display of events held in the village relating to Queen Elizabeth II and her reign will be on display and photos of the Clean Up.

Looking ahead to our main bi-annual event, this time we are planning an event on 25th and 26th June to reflect village life around the date when the church tower fell in 1796, some 220 years ago. Heather has been doing lots of research into Newspapers around that time and finding news articles about the church and village. At present we plan the exhibition to cover the period from 1760 to 1820, which is the time of the reign of George III and includes the Enclosure awards. The Heritage Society had access to the original enclosure map and has excellent copies of this important document. I'm looking into obtaining grants to help with cost of printing, research and display costs.

If anyone would like to help with the research or at the time of the exhibition please contact either myself or Heather.

10. Any Other Business.

The Village Walk will be on 25 March starting at 1030 at the top of the Chapel.

The meeting closed at 1925.