

Parish Council Meeting held at Hardwick on 6th December 2022

Present: David Alexander (Chairman), Andrew Penn, Jeremy Alexander, Jeremy Styles, and Josephine Murgatroyd (Clerk).

Also present was Alison Thomas (County Councillor)

Apologies: Mark Cann, Miles Moseley and Michael Edney (District Councillor)

Three Parishioners were present.

1 Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27th September 2022 were read, confirmed and signed.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Defibrillator

The Clerk had made enquiries re further training and was waiting a response.

Andrew Penn confirmed that he continued to check the defibrillator. The defibrillator sign needed to be placed in the kiosk and this would be done as soon as weather permitted.

Highways

Gary Overland from Highways visited Shelton and met Mark and Gordon Cann and the Clerk to discuss the issues on Low Road.

There were three issues as follows:

1. the foot bridge in the water run has been very badly damaged following a vehicle leaving the road and colliding with the concrete and metal railings. Gary Overland agree to clear the site of the debris as the bridge was no longer being used.
2. Low Road – there was a discussion re the problem when the road floods to the extent that the ditch is completely submerged making it impossible to see thereby becoming a serious hazard. Due to the narrowness of the ditch, the only option was to install hazard warning marker posts which would be concreted in. Gary Overland confirmed he will arrange for this work to be programmed.
3. The bend at the bottom of Fritton Hill- Two cars had recently failed to negotiate the bend and had ended up in the adjoining ditch. Over the years a number of vehicles had failed to negotiate the bend in both directions and had crashed. It was agreed with Gary Overland, that chevron warning signs for traffic approaching in both directions of the bend would be the best idea. Mark Cann suggested suitable locations taking into account where vehicles had left the road. Arrangements would be made for the necessary work to be completed.

Alison Thomas confirmed that she was prepared to utilise her highways budget to assist with the costs involved.

Village Sign and Well

It was understood that arrangements were in hand for the work to be completed over the winter months.

3. Correspondence

Village Hall

The Chairman reported that he had received no response (not even an acknowledgement) from the village hall committee to his initial letter delivered on 17th October or his reminder delivered on 17th November. His letter offered assistance from the Parish Council to call a public meeting and requested sight of the plans, reports etc that had been obtained by the village hall according to their letter as well as details of the accounts and the date of the next AGM.

The Parish Council were concerned about the lack of information from the village hall committee and various options as to the next step were discussed.

Miscellaneous

Regular newsletters were received from NALC, Norfolk Constabulary including Operation Randall. District and Parish Council elections will take place on 4th May 2023.

4. Planning

The Laurels, Hardwick

The application for planning permission was approved by the District Council.

5. Accounts

The current balance was £2,373.00. The Clerk had circulated the budget (copy attached) to enable the precept to be fixed for the next financial year. Due to the current balance (which was larger than usual), the anticipated expenditure and the current cost of living situation, it was proposed by Jeremy Alexander, seconded by the Chairman and agreed that for the *next* financial year the precept should be reduced to £750.

The PC considered whether any donations should be made to parish organisations. A donation of £200 to the Parochial Church Council was proposed by Andrew Penn, seconded by the Chairman and agreed by the PC.

There was to be no donation to the village hall as they had apparently received £20,000 in Covid grants, had not cashed any of the PC cheques for hire of the hall and also had not supplied any financial information as requested by the Chairman. If required, this decision could always be revisited once the extent of the 'significant refurbishment' work required to enable the village hall to reopen was ascertained.

6. Meeting Suspended for Public Participation

Alison Thomas informed the PC that the County Council budget had to find savings of 60 million pounds by the end of February. She also outlined the possibility that Norfolk could have a directly elected leader. This election would be separate to any elections for county councillors and could result in the leader not having a working majority. There were still issues re dentistry in the County, but it was possible that the dental surgery could reopen in Long Stratton.

As far as the Long Stratton bypass was concerned, planning was delayed due to the issue of nutrient neutrality but the funding was still in place.

7.Any Other Business

There was none.

8. Date of Next Meeting

This was fixed for 7th March 2023 at 7.30pm

The Meeting closed at 8.40pm

Chairman
2023

Payments:- Shelton and Hardwick PCC - £225 (£25 for use of Church for PC Meeting and £200.00 donation)