

Annual Parish Council Meeting held at Hardwick Village Hall on Tuesday 3rd January 2017

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

Apologies: Jeremy Alexander

There was one Parishioner present together with Alison Thomas (County Councillor and District Councillor)

1. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th September 2016 were read, confirmed and signed.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Highways

The damaged 30mph sign had still not yet been replaced and will be reported again to the Highways Department.

The Highway Rangers had cleared the drain on Low Road together with a drain in The Street.

The Clerk had not yet contacted the Highways Department about the road edge collapsing near to the junction of Slip Shoe Lane and Hardwick Road as she had not been able to locate the exact location.

The Chairman said he would check the road and speak to the Clerk if there was still a problem.

Common Road, Hardwick had not yet been closed for BT to do any work. The Clerk understood that the work was still outstanding. The Chairman confirmed that there was still a telephone cable on the verge that appeared to be not in use. This needed to be removed in order to ensure there were no issues when the verge was cut. The Clerk would speak to BT.

3. Correspondence

a) South Norfolk District Council

There was nothing to report.

b) Norfolk County Council

The Clerk informed the PC of a request from the County Council about developing closer links to local schools. As there was already close links with Shelton School and particularly FOSS, it was not felt anything further to do.

c) Miscellaneous

A request for a donation was received from Diss CAB. The Clerk contacted them as a donation of £25 had been made in March. This donation had not been received and the cheque had not been presented. Accordingly, a new cheque for £25 was sent. The Clerk read out the letter of thanks received from Diss CAB.

The Local Government Boundary Commission had conducted a review of District Council ward boundaries. The ward represented by Alison Thomas was to change to include Tasburgh but to no longer include Woodton and Bedingham. This change was in line with the need to ensure that all wards had similar number of parishioners. The PC decided not to make any further comment in the consultation.

CPRE had repeated their request for support in their campaign to oppose new housing targets that were in the view of CPRE 'unnecessary and damaging development'. The pledge requested that no new sites should be allocated until all current sites had been developed. The PC discussed the matter and decided that the campaign should be supported and the Chairman accordingly signed the pledge on behalf of the PC.

The current owners of Shelton Hall had placed the grassland surrounding the Hall on the market to sale. The sale particulars made no mention of the fact that the majority of this land was in a S.H.I.N.E. namely Specific Heritage Inventory for Natural England. Reference was however made to possible early cultivation of the land. It was understood that being included in a SHINE meant that there were restrictions as to cultivating the land. Natural England had been contacted for clarification as the PC were concerned that any purchaser could be ignorant of the restrictions and inadvertently cultivate the land. A reply from Natural England was awaited.

The PC had been contacted about the possibility of SNDC installing a broadband hub in the village hall. The e-mail had been forwarded to the Village Hall Committee. Alison Thomas was aware of the initiative and understood it was to assist with start up costs and line rental for an initial period. The running costs would then have to be met by the Village Hall Committee. It was not clear as to how much use there would be with the hub, as the issues with broadband seemed to be more with Shelton properties than those in Hardwick. Broadband would certainly assist the PC in being able to access the internet for planning applications at PC Meetings.

The Clerk had obtained the contact details of the person at Norfolk County Council who was responsible for the broadband programme in the County. Mark Cann will contact the County Council as he and other residents of Shelton Spot had particular issues. The School had its own broadband connection which was installed several years ago, but it was not thought possible to connect into this.

Alison Thomas said that the issue with poor mobile phone coverage was being looked at by the County Council who were trying to get the mobile phone companies to work together.

4. Planning Cases

a) Long Stratton Area Action Plan

Alison Thomas updated the PC with a progress report. There were still a number of issues to be resolved, but there were plans for a roundabout at the Hempnall crossroads under consideration. She was still determined that there would be a safe crossing for parishioners where Hall Road met the bypass in Long Stratton. A roundabout was still a possibility, but nothing had been decided.

b) Shelton Hall Barn, Shelton

SNDC had granted the application for a new access road from the rear of the barn to the existing driveway. However, permission had been granted with conditions including a requirement for a 'written scheme of investigation'. This would include provision for 'analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition'. This condition was imposed to ensure the potential archaeological interest of site is investigated.

c) Street Farm, Hardwick

An application for Listed Building permission to replace 5 windows had been approved by the PC and granted by SNDC.

5. Accounts

Bank Balance £753.65

The Parish Council discussed the Precept for 2017/18. The budget document was considered (a copy is attached to these Minutes). All were in agreement that the precept plus the Council Grant should not exceed £1,000. Accordingly, as the Council Grant for the next financial year was £15, this made the precept £895. This sum was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Jeremy Styles and formally approved by the PC. The request form from SNDC was completed.

The PC considered the making of donations to the 3 Parish Organisations. It was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Jeremy Styles that £150 should be paid to each, namely FOSS, PCC and Village Hall. This was approved by the PC.

6. Meeting Suspended for Public Participation

Alison Thomas informed the PC about the following issues:-

- In respect of business rates, the Government grant was reducing with the intention that local government would be self-sufficient with the retention of business rates.
- Children's services and social services were the two biggest financial drains on County Council's finances. The overspend this financial year was £18 million between the two departments.
- The County Council was likely to increase the Council tax for the next financial year between 3.8% and 4.8%.
- Long Stratton High School's exam results had been declining. However, there was now a new Headteacher and a new Head of Governors. It was hoped that the School would now be turned around before the next Ofsted inspection.

7. Any Other Business

There was none.

8. Date of Next Meeting

This was fixed for Tuesday 21st March 2017 at 7.30pm.

The Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Chairman

2017

<u>Cheques:-</u>	Village Hall Hire	£15.00
	Donations:- FOSS	£150.00
	Village Hall	£150.00
	PCC	£150.00