

WILBURTON PARISH COUNCIL.

Chair: Kevin Hennessy

Clerk: Mrs G Woods

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Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Wednesday 13 May 2015 in St Peters Hall

Present: Councillors Hennessy, Fella, Dodson, Forsyth, Reynolds Howard. Councillor Hunt and 12 local residents.

1. Apologies

Councillor Upton

2. Chairman's Report

Councillor Hennessy gave the following report:-

Firstly, welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Parish Council has gone through some minor re-structuring this year, with the formation of Committees and Working Groups to address each area of responsibility we have, in an effort to speed up decision making and to get more things done. This, I believe has made us more productive, and I believe we will continue to be more productive in the future. Through these changes the major events in our village, the Beer Festival and the annual Fireworks display, now come under the umbrella of the Parish Council, who give these events their full support.

In terms of what has been achieved in the past year, the Parish Council has been responsible for the building and commissioning of the new play park for its youngest parishioners, which has been very well received by the vast majority who have commented. It would be wrong to say everyone has welcomed it, but to mis-quote Abraham Lincoln, you cannot please all of the people all of the time. I do believe that it is however a very welcome addition to the facilities in our village, and I thank the Working Group responsible, in particular my colleague Chris Fella and Joanne Forsyth, Hannah Reynolds, Jo Emmerton, Pam Austin, Jo Temple, Tim Hickling, Liz Thompson and Andy Goodman for their fantastic hard work.

In terms of the priorities the Parish Council identified this year when looking at strategic aims for the village, the highest priority was given to a footpath on Broadway, to allow safe passage for the children who have to walk along this road to get to school, during a time of high traffic activity. I am delighted to say our bid for support from East Cambs was well received and prioritised, enabling us to receive a major contribution to the cost of this project from the District Council. This project is currently under way. I just hope that car owners do not think the new pavement is a new facility to park cars, thus forcing mothers with push chairs into the road, which appears to be a popular aim for some residents of Clarkes Lane. Our Community Safety and Road Safety Committee will need to consider this in the coming year.

The PC is also spending money on improvements to St Peter's Hall, and the kitchen facilities have been vastly improved this year, thanks to our Minor Works Committee.

In terms of work for the future, we are working hard to secure the changes to the lease on the recreation field which is owned by the Pell Estate, in order to secure funding for a new pavilion. This has been an objective and a priority for very many years; however I do believe we are making progress at long last, with our newly formed Pavilion Working Group.

Other priorities we have include securing affordable housing for parishioners through supporting the work of the Community Land Trust, and I will ask the CLT Vice-Chair, Councillor Dodson, to say a few words on this.

Councillor Dodson confirmed that this was the 1st Community Land Trust and fully supported by Councillor Hunt. The policies and procedures were now in place – Stretham has a site, but it is the early stages for Wilburton.

In terms of deciding the future priorities for the Parish Council, it is important that we prioritise the needs and wants of all parishioners, not just our own perceptions of these. To that end, one of my colleagues has been responsible for the creation of a Community Led Plan, so we will know what parishioners want from us, and I will ask David Reynolds, who has led this, to say a few words on the subject.

Councillor Reynolds confirmed had received great feedback from phase 1 regarding surveys etc, good feedback from acre and consultation with all relevant parties. Data currently being analysed for contribution to questionnaire.

Finally you may realise that the Parish Council is not at full strength since the election, owing to the retirement from the PC of two of its longest standing and hardest working members.

I would just like to publicly thank Alan Yarrow and Peter Warren, on behalf of all of the parishioners of our village, for the fantastic work they have done for their home village over very many years. You may all know that being a Parish Councillor is often a thankless and always an unpaid task, however these two gentlemen have served their village with dedication and commitment, and worked hard for the benefit of all of us, so many thanks to both of you, and I know that in your capacities as former councillors, you will still offer help and support where needed.

As a result of their retirement, we now have two vacancies, so if anyone is interested in being considered as a Parish Councillor, please let one of us know.

3. Reports from County and District Councillors.

Councillor Bill Hunt gave his reports as follows

Railway Improvements are being made with lines between Soham and Ely and a station at the Science Park in Milton. The March to Wisbech line also to be re-opened.

The Ely Southern By-pass will go ahead.

Aims to limit HCV's, add weight limits and down grade roads.

New Secondary school in Littleport will allow increases in "A" level offering at City of Ely 6th form centre.

New "Ely Zipper" bus service now started – needs using otherwise will not be continued.

Replacement of street lights had many issues which are being resolved.

The Playground at Berristead has received lots of support and publicity in the papers.

County Archives are coming to Ely at the soon to be vacated "Strikes" site.

The replacement for Dial-a ride have received a £90,000 grant.

A new Cycle route from Wentworth to Witcham Toll is to be opened.

4. Reports from Village Organisations

Fireworks Committee – confirmed that this year the committee had become a working group under the Parish Council, which had cut costs at the Pavilion and enabled more funds to be donated.

Beer Festival – confirmed had donated over £50,000 since started, purely for local charities and community.

Chapel – Councillor Dodson confirmed £1000 raised on Saturday's charity fund raising for local residents.

5. Any Other Business/Questions from floor

A resident raised the problem regarding the grass on the cricket field and it was confirmed that this was on Agenda for next Minor Works committee meeting.

A resident raised the issues still outstanding with some street lights in the Village and it was confirmed that Councillor Upton was dealing with them and the problems were being rectified by the District Council.

A resident raised the issues of parking in Clarkes Lane and it was confirmed that options were being investigated, along with parking problems elsewhere in the Village.

Meeting closed 8.25 pm

Signed

Date