

The Annual Parish Meeting of the Hepworth Parish Council took place on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at the village hall where the following items were discussed.

<b>Attendees</b>	Mr J Beales (Vice Chairman)	Mrs M MacPherson
	Mr G Bloomfield	Mrs K Shearer
	Mrs M Beales	Mr A Yorke
	Mrs S Yeomans (Parish Clerk)	Cllr J Spicer
	Mrs R Vernon	Ms L White-Miller
	PC A De Jongh	
<b>Apologies</b>	Mr D Stannard (Chairman)	Cllr C Bull
	Rev D Messer	

There were 4 members of the public present

- |   | <b>Action</b> |
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| <p><b>1. Welcome by the Chairman</b><br/>Mr J Beales, Vice Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting in the absence of the Chairman.</p>   |               |
| <p><b>2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 21 May 2015</b><br/>The minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed accordingly.</p>  |               |
| <p><b>3. Chairman's Report</b><br/>The Chairman was unavoidably delayed so no report was available.</p>   |               |
| <p><b>4. Report by Rev David Messer (read by the Clerk in his absence)</b><br/>Hepworth is now part of the Stanton Benefice with Rev David Messer Priest in Charge.<br/>The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has 5 members.<br/>There are services twice a month on the first and fourth Sundays with an average attendance of 10.<br/>A number of social and fund raising events are planned throughout 2016.<br/>The PCC was able to pay the Parish Share in full, future years are less certain as the PCC relies on annual grants for a large part of their income. Indications are there will be enough to meet the Parish Share – the main expense; thereafter the fund will be virtually empty. It is critical to look at how the church is funded going forward, presently it is not financially sustainable long term.<br/>It has been identified that toilet facilities should be available in the church and the building could potentially be open and used as a resource by the village community.<br/>27 people attended a meeting on 20th April 2016 to look at options for the church going forward. Plans for the reinstating of the gallery and addition of toilet facilities were on display and generally approved. The PCC will be writing to everyone in the village outlining options for the church's future with an opportunity for all to have their say.<br/>The historical importance and spiritual heritage to our community make the church and important part of our village.<br/>The PCC look forward to working with the council and village community to enable the building to continue to serve our community now and for future generations.</p> |               |
| <p><b>5. Report from Cllr Joanna Spicer</b><br/>Thanks to Chairman, (Dave Stannard) members, Clerk (Sue Yeomans) etc. for the welcome and keeping me in touch - both at meetings and when needed in between meetings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. County Council remains very committed to retaining essential front line services – despite massive cuts in government grant and we expect more to come</li> <li>2. Savings of over £170 million in last 4 years. £34.4 million this year and a further £75 million to come over next 2 years – HUGE amounts of money and really difficult</li> <li>3. County Council element of the council tax has now been frozen for the 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. However, after some considerable debate and worry we did accept the Government's request to add a 2% levy to the council tax to go towards the rising costs of adult social care</li> <li>4. Schools: education remains a top priority and you are aware how concerned I have been</li> </ol>   |               |

that not all schools in Suffolk were rated “Good” or “Outstanding” by OFSTED and how low Suffolk was in the various league tables..... Statistics can tell any story – good and bad - but I can now report an increase in good and outstanding schools in the county (up to 80%) AND we have moved significantly up league tables for key stage 3 and GCSE results.

5. I am delighted that Hopton School is still rated “Excellent” by OFSTED. I am pleased to have worked with the school and their road safety officers and helped fund their road safety work from my locality budget.
6. Ixworth Free School continues to grow in numbers and they have a superb new extension. Transport is provided from Hepworth to both Thurston Community College and to Ixworth Free School
7. Waste – very pleased incinerator (energy from waste facility) now open and fully operational –and will mean no more waste to landfill, energy for growing veg and a saving per annum of £8 million. We still need to resolve the location of a new transfer station in BSE which is proving to be controversial in planning terms!
8. Roads: biggest concern to public and parish councils. Contract now with Keir May Gurney – many of our staff have transferred to them. Problems of potholes worse than ever after flooding – but working through backlog – also re-surfacing programme. An extra £10 million of capital funding for roads has been allocated this year but it may be difficult to get all the schemes in the pipe line delivered
9. Adult care biggest pressure and responsibility – as well as important investment in child protection (700 children in care)and I still work on county fostering and adoption panel 2-3 days a month

Hepworth – the past year and current issues

- Speeding – I am pleased to have helped purchase a radar device
  - Flooding and potholes – especially Willow Green
  - Community Transport – bus will continue
  - GP surgery in Hopton
- Please note my e mail address is [Joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk)

#### 6. Report by Carol Bull – Borough Councillor (Read by the Clerk in her absence)

In the wider scheme of things it is hoped that work will soon start on the Bury St Edmunds Eastern Relief Road, linking the A14 to Moreton Hall and opening up the access to the Suffolk Business Park.

We have Devolution on the horizon. The intention of this being for counties to work together more closely. The delivery of services such as housing, infrastructure, transport and health care will then devolve from Government and result in much more local control. Suffolk is in negotiations with Norfolk and East Cambridgeshire.

We are also awaiting the recommendations on the siting of the proposed new Waste Hub following the re-consultation that was undertaken to identify the best location. As you are aware there has been a lot of controversy over this but hopefully a satisfactory solution will be reached soon. These recommendations will be made public on 7<sup>th</sup> June and will be considered by Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup>.

In conjunction with Suffolk County Council and Forest Heath District Council St Edmundsbury Council has set up a housing company, Barley Homes, to build affordable homes themselves on suitable council land.

Of more local interest have been the changes to policing with the closure of some stations and the fact that police liaison officers are not going to be routinely available to go to Parish Council

meetings. They have assured us however that if there are matters of particular concern they will be happy to talk to you and will be sending monthly reports to let you know what is happening. I believe they would be grateful for feedback on these reports if you do not feel they are helpful or indeed appropriate. Tim Passmore is always very keen to get out and talk to Parish Councils and it may be possible to arrange this at some stage if it is of interest. He will be at a Public meeting at Stanton on 27<sup>th</sup> May if anyone would like to go.

Brown bins have been quite an issue this year as well with the introduction of the new chargeable Garden Waste Service. Despite the problems with the letters which were supposed to have been sent out the message has got round and the Barningham ward has the third highest uptake in West Suffolk at around 50%. There were a few teething problems but things seem to have settled down but I am happy to speak to anyone with a problem. I am also conscious that not everyone has received the information about the compost bin offer and you will have seen the info I e-mailed earlier which people might find helpful. I shall also put a piece in the July Parish News to further publicise the initiative.

I will still have a Locality Budget in 2016/17 so if you know of any local club or group who require funding for a project then I will be happy to discuss this with them to see if we can help.

I am sure that as Parish Council you have had been contacted by the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit encouraging you to think about Community Emergency Planning and I would urge you to give it some consideration. Emergency Planning is not just about dealing with possible flooding, but many other things such as lengthy power outages, road blockages and other damage caused by stormy weather, roads blocked by snow etc. It is also about ensuring your community is prepared and able to help its most vulnerable residents in times of difficult or crisis. Barningham Parish Council have an Emergency Plan and I am sure would be happy to chat through what is involved as would I.

With regard to Willow Green. As you know I went out to see Fredella Hogg to see for myself the parking problems and then I had a meeting with John Feveyer of Havebury at first it did not look promising because whilst they recognised the work needed doing they said no funds were available. I impressed upon him the need to do the work before this winter and have had now several more conversations with him as has Fredella. It seems we may have made a break through and things do look more positive. This is just in relation to the parking behind the bungalows. I have approached Joanna Spicer about a possible lay-by as this is a County Council issue but this we do not have any high hopes for this. I feel however if we can get the rear parking and lighting sorted before winter we will have done quite well.

Finally and not least I will mention the Doctor's surgery but as I believe Joanna will be with you I will leave her to update you.

#### **7. Report by Police – PC A De Jongh**

No report available, new data is being sorted. There have been no significant crimes in Hepworth but there have been a spate locally. The police are looking for an organised gang and not locals. Due to budget cuts police are very stretched but ask that everyone continues to report anything suspicious.

A sergeant and PCSO have been lost and the SNP have moved back to Bury St Edmunds. Ixworth is now a drop-in station for officers. Currently recruiting more PCSO.

Rural Officers are PC De Jongh and PCSO K Rushton, with Sgt A Wybrow and Sgt C Chisnall.

#### **8. Parishioners Comments**

Lauren White-Miller, Families and Communities Officer (Locality Officer) outlined her role supporting councillors and communities to come together in order to identify projects and assets important to the local area. Works with Cllr Spicer and Cllr Bull helping overcome issues. Also works supporting vulnerable adults and older parishioners.

Will forward information to Fredella Hogg, via the Clerk, in relation to car parking issues, lighting

and maybe layby outside nos 1 to 7 at Willow Green. Will catch up and liaise with Cllr Bull on this issue.

Mrs W Summerell thanked the PC for their support of the Art Group which has been running for 6 years and has 20 members with 8 on the waiting list to join. She thanks Cllr M Beales for coming out on various occasions to address issues with the heating.

**10. The meeting closed at 8.05**