

FENSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL

124TH ASSEMBLY OF THE PARISH

Thursday 16th May 2019 at 19.30 at

Fenstanton and Hilton Primary School, School Lane, Fenstanton

NOTES

Present : Cllrs : Kent, (Chairman) Ferrier, McGee, Pryke, Saunderson, Turner, White
HDC Cllrs Mead and Dickinson, CCC Cllr Bates, Annette Eggett – clerk, 5
members of the public

1 Apologies for absence

Not obliged to be given but Cllr Caswell and Cllr John Davies (HDC)

2 To review the notes of the 123rd Assembly of the Parish held on 3 May 2018

2.1 Village Meeting

The Chairman reported that the village meeting had been deferred until constructive items following focus groups could be included and reported to parishioners.

2.2 Bus service – extended to 2020

The Chairman reported that the bus service had been extended to 2020.

2.3 Potholes

There had been some repair of reported potholes and Cllr Bates confirmed that there were three new 'dragon' machines in the country that would be used to repair potholes.

2.4 Grass cutting

Following a review of the grass cutting costs a new contract had been awarded to Martin Heyward.

2.5 Fenstanton – two wards

The splitting of Fenstanton into two wards – North and South – had taken place.

3 Chairman's annual report

The Chairman reported on activities of the Parish Council over the last year and future projects coming up for this year. He thanked all councillors for their diligence, time and hard work all given without payment and for heading up various projects.

The Parish Council often deals with problems that it cannot resolve without the help of District and County Council and those councillors were also thanks for their help. Thanks were also given to Sally Lee a former councillor who is acting as lay chair of the Burial Board Committee, Donna Butcher, Susan Atwood, Nigel Tilbury and the Clerk.

The Parish Council had reviewed 27 planning applications (down from 47 last year).

The full Chairman's report has been circulated and is available on the website.

3.1 Future actions and considerations for the Parish Council included :

- Formation of the Parish Council for the forthcoming year
- Increased liaison and support with village and community groups
- Lack of parking space – Cllr white has done a paper on this
- Formation of a Speedwatch group
- Village meeting
- CIL investment in consultation with parishioners
- Bus service
- Dairy Crest and Park developments to be completed
- Improvements on A14 slip road
- MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) in liaison with the school
- Fen cycle way (still in feasibility stage)
- Restoration of pond and surrounds
- Whipping post – installation at the Clock Tower
- Upgrade of junior football pitch

3.2 Morris Homes

There followed a long and general discussion about the Morris Homes development. Martyn Crawshaw (present) thanked Cllr Ferrier for meeting with Morris Homes and stopping the felling of trees. The situation highlighted the lack of communication between HDC and the Parish Council. There was also an issue of the underground water drainage system which concerned the residents in that they were not aware of the extent to which they may be held responsible for the maintenance of the system. Cllr Mead answered several questions from members of the public and reported that HDC enforcement had investigated the entire site and situation and whilst retrospective the approvals had been given. He agreed this was in no way ideal. The Chairman agreed and stated a robust method going forward must be established so that the Parish Council and HDC could challenge what has been decided. All agreed that Morris Homes have a pattern of disregarding planning decisions; Cllr Mitchel was concerned about other projects they may have underway. Cllr White and Cllr Bates pointed out that meetings with Morris Homes in the early stages had been very open but what was discussed was not what was originally planned. It was suggested that the situation should be taken up with the local MP. Cllrs Mead, Kent and Ferrier

were all happy to move forward on this. Overall everyone agreed that Morris Homes lacked integrity in the way they deal with the Parish.

ACTION : Cllrs Mead, Kent, Ferrier

3.3 Neighbourhood Plan / CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)

Martyn Crawshaw queried why the Parish Council had not produced a Neighbourhood Plan (not a Parish Plan) so that another 10% of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) monies could be received.

The Chairman explained that this was a complex matter and the Parish Council had limited time and limited councillors. A plan needed input from parishioners and most were not engaged; getting support was very difficult. Cllr Mead felt it would be worthwhile given the development of the Travel Lodge area. It was agreed that a Neighbourhood Plan would go onto the agenda for the full Parish Council. Martyn Crawshaw was happy to be involved with the plan. Cllr Mitchell had put a lot of work into listing organisations suitable for the Parish Council to approach for funding and there would be used to enhance CIL funds. He stated that the value of the grants received this year from Mick George Community Fund could not be undervalued.

3.4 General Purposes Overspend / General Finance

The Chairman explained that the majority of the overspend had been around Parish maintenance and was covered from reserves. He also explained that not everything could be covered by CIL – although CIL funds had been used to seed projects and used wisely.

3.5 Flooding / Church Car Park Fence

Cllr Mead explained that flooding had to be borderline dangerous for any action to be taken. He had dealt with both this and the fence. Martyn Crawshaw asked if there was a way to track complaints for residents; Cllr Mead agreed this would be helpful at HDC. Cllrs Kent and Mead would liaise. Martyn Crawshaw thanked Cllr Bates and former councillor Jim Buchanan for their achievements in other flooding issues.

Action : Cllrs Kent and Mead

4. Responsible Financial Officer's Report

The Clerk and RFO delivered her report. This has been circulated and is available on the website and repeated in full below :

- The internal audit has taken place and the accounts will be presented at next week's meeting for signing and adoption.
- The Parish Council increased the Precept by 4% for financial year which gave the PC the sum of £64,012.00. We do have a £28,000 deficit on the general income and expenditure account which will be covered from general reserves.

However, the PC is well within the advised six month's work of 'spend' (minimum three months).

- Expenditure increased. In particular and like last year General Purposes expenditure saw a marked rise - this was again due to increased village maintenance costs. The majority of payments were to our village grounds man Martin but we do also pay Martin to do many MH does many ad hoc repair and maintenance jobs. We have awarded our grass cutting contract to Martin to ensure the best value for money in the future.
- The General Reserve fund has gone down this year and stands at £26,814 but our total reserves (those that are earmarked) are in a healthy position at £35,983. The PC has two smaller accounts – the Pitfield Fund which stands at just under £19K and the Youth Club fund stands at just over £2,400.
- Receipts to the PC are limited as you know – precept, CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy from developments in the parish – and some small receipts from memorial headstones although we did refund one purchased plot last year.
- CIL investment began last year with seed funding amounts used by the PC) when applying (successfully) to the Mick George Community Fund for the Outdoor Adult Gym, Chequer Street Playground refurbishment and the restoration of the village pond to its former condition and upgrade of the area surround the Clock Tower. We also used CIL funds to repair the erosion to Parish green kerbs and install the Pitfield Playground.
- The following grants were awarded:

S137 (Local Government Act)

- £250 – Friendship Group towards annual programme of speakers
- £250 - Rainbow Guiding Group

S19 LGMP 1976 S.19 (Grants to Sports Facilities)

- £500 - Village Sports Day Committee
- £500 - Fenstanton Youth Football Club

A donation was made to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal (S.137 payment) by way of the usual Poppy Wreath purchase) and in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the First World War we asked Martin to replant and tidy up the memorial garden and the area around the monument.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING ENDED AT 20.49