

## **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 24 May 2005 in St. Peter's Hall**

1. The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Amarylis Midgley, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for turning out in such large numbers. She introduced herself and the clerk and paid tribute to the hard work of the previous Chairman of the Council, Cllr Tony Bennison.

2. Apologies were received from Mrs Green and from Councillors Chris Astill, Brian Olive and Alan Wilkinson.

3. The Chairman presented the Annual Report of the Parish Council. Items included were:

- the role, work load and responsibilities of the councillors and the clerk;
- the preparations undertaken by councillors for the crucial decisions which would be made during the next year which would determine the shape and character of Woodhall Spa over the next 20 years and beyond;
- the importance of involving local people in decision making and the vital role played by the Parish Plan process in achieving this. In connection with this she paid tribute to David Clarke and Graham Keegan, who had chaired the committee and the committee members who were working very hard to produce the Plan.
- the importance of good communications between all levels of local government and other authorities and concerns recently about District Council decisions relating to both development control and Jubilee Park.
- local concerns about anti-social behaviour and the importance of reporting incidents to the police as soon as they occur.

She ended her report with reference to the schedule of Parish Council meetings, the minutes of which could be seen in the library.

4. The clerk read the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting and it was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that they be signed as a correct record. The Chairman signed the minutes. 5. Matters arising from the minutes were:

- the abandonment of the Closed Churchyard Project in favour of improvements to Royal Square on the advice of the police. A scheme was being drawn up to improve the quality and quantity of lighting. The scheme could be added to in subsequent years as further funding became available. The Council was grateful for a generous donation towards it from the previous Agricultural Show Committee.
- the Council's continued support of the Roughton campaign against noxious smells;
- with regard to the Coronation Hall, the Charity Commissioners were looking for the best way forward to amalgamate the two charitable trusts that were involved in the Coronation Hall. The clerk had kept on file the forms that volunteers had kindly filled in last year and they might still need to be called upon. The current proposal put

forward by the Charity Commissioners was that the County Council, which had been running the hall should become the trustee for the next 18 or so years, but the County Council had not yet indicated whether it would do so.

6. Mr David Clarke, Chairman of the Parish Plan Steering Committee gave a power point presentation on the results of the Questionnaire. An interesting outcome was that the answers to the Young People's Questionnaire showed that they shared the same interests, hopes and concerns as the adults. He gave a brief outline of what the final plan would look like and contain, the most important part of it being the Action Plan. He explained that the draft plan would be available for public consultation at an Open Evening in St Andrew's School on 21 July. The final plan would then be drawn up which would be adopted by the Parish Council, who would take it forward. The Chairman of the Council explained that the Council would receive separate feedback on the results of the Housing Needs Survey. Then she thanked Mr Clarke and his team for all the time and effort they had put and would continue to put into the project.

7. On the topic of development control, the Chairman opened this agenda item with a detailed explanation about development and planning and the role of the Parish Council in the planning process. She explained the problems arising in Woodhall Spa and other similar villages because of the way planning authorities interpreted government planning guidelines, particularly in the development of windfall and brownfield sites. This had resulted in Woodhall Spa having far more development than had ever been envisaged at any level and the problem had been exacerbated by the fact that development in Roughton Moor had not been taken into account despite its impact on Woodhall Spa.

The Parish Council was not against all development per se, but was very concerned at the rate and quantity of development, the risk of spoiling the special character of Woodhall Spa and the need to remain a balanced and sustainable community. The latter was becoming increasingly difficult because of the dearth of low cost homes within the price range of local young residents.

The topic was then open to the floor for discussion and the following points were made:

- examples were given of windfall sites for which planning permission had already been applied;
- the Ross Poultry site was still too densely developed despite the fact that the original application had been reduced from 50 to 39.
- Fairlawns was likely to close as a Nursing Home, with 22 people being made homeless as a future purchaser would want it converting for housing.
- G.N. Construction had done some excellent restoration to some fine old houses but did not have the support of the Parish Council. The Chairman replied that it was not the design or the quality that was objected to but the quantity and timing.
- no new land was to be allocated to housing development.

- low cost housing was difficult to achieve as land owners wanted as high a price as possible for their land.

- concern was expressed about planning permission granted to the communications mast on Green Lane.

8. The Chairman opened the agenda item on Jubilee Park by explaining that she had to declare a possible prejudicial interest as she lived in the park. She could report on facts, figures and decisions made by the Parish Council but could not participate in any discussions, questions or votes. She then explained the current position of the park in the context of its historical development under Lady Weigall in 1935 and its gift to the people of Woodhall Spa for their use. It had been run by the Urban District Council until ELDC took it over in 1974. She gave details of previous investment, development and maintenance of the swimming pool and other park facilities. She explained the Parish Council's concerns over the lack of investment in recent years and the lack of real response from the District Council to the Parish Council's written suggestions for running and marketing the pool and park. This concern was increased by a message from ELDC that there was no money in the budget for Jubilee Park and that ELDC would make a decision on the future of the park and pool after a survey of park users and the economic impact on Woodhall Spa of losing this facility.

The Parish Council was very concerned that ELDC did not seem to have the will or the wherewithal to make the necessary investment. The best course of action would be for the people of Woodhall Spa to follow the example of Horncastle and Skegness and use public pressure to show support for investment in the complex. Accordingly the Parish Council had invited the Leader and Chief Executive of ELDC to a public meeting to answer questions on the future of Jubilee Park. People with questions were requested to put them in writing before hand, although other questions could be put on the night.

The discussion was then opened to the floor and the following points were made:

- Horncastle swimming pool had been on the list for improvement for ten years. The political vote had gone against Cllr Hill's proposal that no money should be spent on any pool until after the Leisure Report had been published.

- It was queried whether East Lindsey's focus was on the coastal strip rather than on the inland resorts. Woodhall Spa also needed investment to make it sustainable. Why was East Lindsey waiting until the end of the season before making a decision.

- There was concern that by the time East Lindsey found money for the necessary repairs to the pool, it would be too late and would cost far more.

- Rules regarding the accompaniment of children in the pool were making it impossible for families with more than two children to go swimming. Children's ability to swim would suffer as a result.

Cllr Pestell brought this agenda item to an end with reference to the end of season survey. It was important for as many people as possible to use the pool if they did not wish to lose it.

9. With regard to the delivery of the quarterly newsletter, volunteers to help with the distribution were asked for.

10. Other organisations gave the following reports:

Mr Baker on behalf of the Twinning Association said that the visit involving 68 people from France had been very successful. Finding a venue to entertain 150 people had been difficult and they had used Minting Village Hall. Mr Cardwell said that people could use the large hall at the EGU, but Mr Baker said that the cost of the in house catering made it too expensive for them.

Reporting on behalf of the Woodhall Spa Festival, Cllr Roy drew attention to a concert to be given by the London Mozart Players on 7 June.

11. The following points were raised under Any Other Business;

- a committee had been formed of people who were against the erection of a telecommunications mast in Green Lane.

- Cllr Harness said that he was proud of the people of Woodhall Spa and the Parish Council. He advised that people should write to "The Messenger", and make their complaints about communication. He also explained that because of the Code of Conduct he was unable to discuss planning applications with people before hand.

The meeting ended with the Chairman thanking everyone for attending and showing that they cared.