

# **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 MAY 2010 AT 7.30 PM IN ST PETERS HALL WOODHALL SPA**

## **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr David Clarke, introduced himself and welcomed everyone. He explained the purpose and format of the meeting and commented that he felt that there had been political and economic changes over the past 18 months which would affect the village.

## **2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mrs Elspeth Mace.

## **3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 13 MAY 2009**

It was proposed by Mr M Harness and seconded by Mrs A Midgley that the minutes be signed as a correct record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

## **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The clerk reported that the revised routing of the traffic from the new Cemex site at Park Farm, Tattershall Thorpe had resulted in a positive outcome for the village as the vast majority of HGV's would be routed to the A153 via Tattershall Thorpe. Except for local deliveries, it was now proposed that only about 2.6% of HGVs would pass through Woodhall Spa.

## **5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Chairman informed the meeting that all Parish Council minutes, planning committee minutes, annual parish minutes and annual reports were all on the Parish Council pages of the village website and he encouraged people to visit it.

The Chair explained that parish councillors were elected to serve a four year term and this was the last year in the current term and next year there would be an opportunity to elect a new council. He introduced Tim Peacock who was the new councillor who had been co-opted onto the Council to replace Audrey Pestell and he reported that ELDC would soon be announcing another vacancy for a parish councillor due to the resignation of Gill Baker who had stood down after over 20 years of service to the community; and he encouraged people to apply by stating that the main criteria to apply was to be willing to work to improve the community. Both Gill Baker and Audrey Pestell were thanked for all their hard work on behalf of the village.

The Chair spoke about various matters that the Parish Council had been dealing with over the past 12 months and these included:

- Holding an annual Drainage Summit which was a joint meeting between the Environment Agency, Witham Third Internal Drainage Board, LCC Highways, ELDC Drainage Team, Anglian Water and the Parish Council to speak about ongoing drainage issues in the village and a database had been compiled and the issues were slowly being addressed.
- Taking over responsibility and ownership of the cemetery from ELDC and making the cemetery cost neutral. The Parish Council had been addressing the issue with

rabbits in the cemetery causing damage to the graves and was in the process of installing a rabbit proof fence around the cemetery.

- Japanese Knotweed had been discovered in an area behind the shops on Station Road and the Parish Council had provided shopkeepers and householders with information on how to deal with it
- The Christmas trees and lights were a huge success with over 55 trees being displayed above business premises in the centre of the village, which lit up the entire village and gave it a very festive feel. The feedback received from this project was fantastic and all the businesses who had a tree and volunteers who helped put up and take down the trees were thanked for their help and support.
- Planning permission had been granted for two new caravan sites within the village, one on the land used as the show field and one on the corner of Stixwould Road. These were very emotive applications which split the Parish Council when considering them. The Parish Council had considered lots of different planning applications over the past year, but it was emphasised that the Parish Council was not the Planning Authority, it was only a consultee which gave its opinions on applications in line with planning reasons and planning policy.
- Details were given of the grants that the Parish Council had awarded grants to organisations during the past 12 months which benefitted the community  
Application forms were available from the Parish Clerk if any organisations were in need of financial support for a project which would benefit the village.

The Chair reported that the Parish Council had met the criteria to be eligible to use the 'Power of Wellbeing' which gave the Parish Council an extended power to spend money on certain things which it had previously not been able to, the meeting was given example of areas the Council could use this power for.

- Entered the Best Kept Village Competition and made it to the second round and scored 122/130

The Financial Statement was displayed for everyone to see and the Chair explained the Council's procedures for dealing with financial matters. The Chair ran through the income and expenditure from 2009/10 in detail and spoke about the £19,000 which had been budgeted to carry forward to 2010/11 and explained why the Council needed reserves. He highlighted that the Parish Council had budgeted to carry forward £22,000 at the end of 2009/10, but the actual amount carried forward was £26,000.

There were no comments or questions on the Financial Statement.

The Chair spoke about issues that the Council would be involved with in the future and these included:

- Being asked to take over services that could no longer be provided by the District and County Councils due to financial cut backs, such as public toilets, Green waste collections and Royal Square.
- Keeping up to date with planning matters as the Local Development Framework (LDF) is all up in the air. It was commented that we had more to do as a community but less resources to do it with.

- Encouraging residents to participate and look after the community by getting involved with community groups, activities in the village such as litter picking and newsletter distribution to help reduce the costs of the Parish Council.
- Updating the Parish Plan as it was 5 years old and needed a working group to take a look at it and help reinvigorate it.

People were encouraged to get involved if they felt they could help in any way and it pointed out that volunteers don't need any qualifications, just a willingness to help.

Information was given about how to get in touch with the Parish Council and residents were reminded that Parish Council meetings took place in the Council Chamber at the Parish Council offices in Stanhope Avenue on the first Tuesday of each month and before the meeting formally began there was a public forum which was a chance for residents to speak directly to the Council. The Parish Council also held surgery sessions in the library on the first Saturday of every month where two councillors would be in attendance to take back comments to the Council meetings. The meeting was asked if they wished the Council to continue with the surgery sessions as they had not been regularly attended by the public and those in attendance were in support of the Council continuing the surgery sessions. Residents were encouraged to read the Parish Council newsletters, visit the Community website and interact with the Parish Council throughout the year and not only at the annual parish meeting.

The Chair invited representatives from Community Groups to address the meeting:

#### YOUTH CLUB

Mrs D Robinson gave a report on the future of the Youth Club and encouraged more 12-19 year olds to attend. She also asked for new members for the Youth Club Management Committee.

#### COTTAGE MUSEUM

Mrs J Goodall introduced herself as the new Chairman of the Cottage Museum following the retirement of David Radford after 25 years. Mrs Goodall informed the meeting that the museum had over 60 active volunteers and she thanked the community for participating in the Treasure Box display which had been recognised nationally. She thanked the Parish Council for the grants that the museum had been awarded and she spoke about four large projects that were taking place this year.

#### HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Mr M Czajkowski gave a review of what the committee had been doing during the last year and he reminded the meeting why the Committee had been formed and what its aims were. Mr Czajkowski spoke about the Village Design Statement, Heritage Surveys within the Conservation area and an Artifact Registration Programme. He told the meeting that additional members were needed.

#### FRIENDS OF JUBILEE PARK (FOJP)

Mrs K Barr asked for volunteers to join the group which had been set up in 2003 and it was hoping that the Group would have a very important role in the future of the park.

#### WOODHALL IN BLOOM

Mr G Keegan gave details of day which had been organised to plant tubs for the summer and encouraged people to take part.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE JUBILEE PARK STEERING GROUP PROPOSALS**

The meeting was provided with a summary of where the project was, what the next stages would be and the main reasons and objective of setting up a community framework to takeover Jubilee Park. Residents were told that the legal framework would be an Industrial & Provident Society that was owned by its shareholders. The intent was that every member of the community would be offered the opportunity to buy a single share (cost £1). By purchasing that single share, you would become one of the owners of the IPS and would be entitled to elect the board of directors. By this process, the Park will be managed by the IPS for the community and the IPS will be wholly responsible back to the community for its actions.

Members of the Steering group had spent most of their time producing a business plan and had assisted ELDC with the marketing of Jubilee Park this season which had resulted in the park being promoted significantly better than the previous year. They would be shadow managing the park this year so that next year members would know how to run it.

The meeting was given details of the pool refurbishment, the consultation which would happen with the nearby residents, the need for planning permission for the pool works and the timeline for the decision to be made by ELDC.

The meeting was told that if the project failed then the pool would close eventually as ELDC would not continue to invest in it.

The Chairman and members of the Steering Group answered questions from the public.

The meeting was asked if it was happy with the proposals and the overall response was extremely positive.

Members of the Steering Group was thanked on behalf of the community for their hard work to save the park.

## **7. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

A Grove Drive resident asked why the new street name plates in Grove Drive had been put up for 2-3 days and taken down again. The Chair explained that the new signs were in an appalling state so had been taken down and would be replaced shortly.

District Councillor Leyland answered a query about the green waste service being cut at a time when Woodhall is knee deep in leaves by stating that it is a service that the District Council did not need to provide and it proved a huge cost saving so is very unlikely that it will be reversed.

District Cllr Leyland reminded community groups that each year the District Councillors have £2,000 each to contribute to the community.

District Cllr Harness commented that he had never attended an Annual Parish Meeting which is as enthusiastic or so well attended than the one at this village. He thanked the Parish Council and all other volunteers for their hard work.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.50pm.