

MULBARTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Mulbarton Annual Parish Meeting held on
on Monday 12th May 2014 at 7.00pm.

Councillors present:-

Peter Leigh – Chairman	Steve Sewell	Beverley Leek	Peter Munks
Mark Standley	Claire Smithson	Jon Herbert – District Councillor	

In attendance:

PCSO Darrin Sore, District Councillor Nigel Legg, County Councillor Colin Foulger, representatives from various village organisations and several residents.

1. Chairman of the Parish Council opens the Annual Parish Meeting.

Councillor Peter Leigh welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Mr Rod Barker – Parish tree warden

Mrs Theobald – Infant School

Cllr John Joyce – Mulbarton Neighbourhood Plan

PC Glenn Hambling – Norfolk Constabulary

3. Police Report.

PCSO Sore reported that for the last month, covering 7th April to midnight on 11th May there had been four reported crimes and two calls relating to antisocial behaviour/noise nuisance. The reported crimes were: burglary – overnight of 14/15th April with entry being made via an unlocked door; theft of items from a stored caravan between the period of 25th March & 18th April; harassment – occurring outside the school and theft of ten bicycles that were padlocked together overnight on 6/7th May, these were found on the Common the following day.

For the past twelve months, PSCO Sore reported that that there had been 30 reported crimes against 39 for the previous year (2012/13). PCSO Sore passed on PC Hambling's apologies for being unable to attend this evenings meeting.

PCSO Sore noted that he was aware of issues at the Jubilee gardens concerning the theft of plants and gravel and he would be giving the area some attention as well as the area behind the village hall where the fence and gate had been damaged.

In response to a question, following comment that the Norfolk/Suffolk Constabulary control room merger didn't happen and speculation that Norfolk Constabulary would be losing 70 PCSOs, PCSO Sore stated that the Constabulary was trying to recruit 70 police constables from their existing PCSOs and there was a freeze on recruitment of external entry police constables and redundancies couldn't be ruled out as there will be a reduction in the current numbers of PCSOs. In response to a question whether local communities would be consulted, PCSO Sore replied he hoped so.

In response to a comment made regarding incidents at the back of the village hall, representation from VHMC noted that damage was being caused to the fence around the "Puddleducks area" as the youths were gaining access to retrieve footballs and they had been advised by fire officers that these gates should not be locked. This issue would need further investigation.

4. To confirm and sign the minutes of The Annual Parish meeting held 13th May 2013.

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed accordingly.

5. Parish Council Chairman's report – Peter Leigh.

Cllr Leigh as Chairman of the Parish Council read out the following report:

Chairman's Report 2014

First of all this report is on behalf of all the councillors who have served on the Parish Council over the last 12 months.

It has been another busy year and we achieved many notable successes. Firstly, we raised enough in grants to enable us to go ahead with our new skate park, which was opened in November 2013 and has since been a very popular venue for all ages and genders.

We have cleaned and tidied up two more ponds on The Common – albeit with a lot of hassle from the officers of SNC. As nothing had been done for a long time we felt, as the Parish Council, that something needed doing and we feel it has improved the aspect of the Common. Our work on this was supported by the owner and initial reaction from the Villagers has been positive.

An ecological survey of the Common is ongoing and should be complete by the end of June. This will enable us to formulate yet another management plan, which will be available to all members of the public to view. This exercise is being carried out in conjunction with SNC and the Norwich Fringe Project. SNC have agreed to fund this- strange that they can fund this but had no money available to carry out the work in the first place.

We have repaired the front car park and although we expected financial support from SNC (they have management responsibility) nothing was forthcoming.

We have added extra play equipment (£12,500) at The Meadows, the majority of the money coming from a National Lottery Grant.

We have resurrected the Neighbourhood Development Plan which was originally started in 2012, but due to other commitments and lack of funding it never really got past the first hurdle. The new team led by John Joyce includes two parish councillors, one district councillor and two members of the public. A lot of effort has been put into this exercise and we are convinced this will be a success – but the team can only achieve this if members of the public actively engage and contribute to the exercise.

The PC has continued its support of local organisations

- *£1200 annually to help with the churchyard maintenance*
- *£170 Yearly maintenance of the Church clock which I understand is a war memorial.*
- *£2,500 towards the Christmas Fayre.*
- *£120 towards the Village website*
- *£79 per quarter to the publishing of the Parish Magazine*
- *We also spend £450 per month on employing a handyman to keep the Village clean and tidy.*

We must recognise the effort put in by the “girls” who distribute the Parish Magazine around all the houses in the Village and also to thank Jill Wright for all her efforts over the years in compiling and editing the magazine

You will be pleased to know we have been successful in getting our local pub listed as a Community Asset, which means if the owners ever come to sell it the Village would have six months to look at alternative proposals

We organised our inaugural Christmas Fayre in December and our thanks must go to our Clerk and Cllr. Beverley Leek for all their hard work in making the event a great success. We also thank all the local businesses/organisations who helped with the work and manning their stands. In light of its success we are committed to organising a similar event in 2014 – our provisional date for this is 13th December. No doubt we will update the Village as things progress.

I would take this opportunity to dispel the rumour going round that we are getting allowances for all our work. If people read the minutes of the PC meeting they will see that last year the Councillors voted to forego their allowances and put the money back into the community. By doing so they have made approximately £1,400 available to be spent on community works.

We have renegotiated the grass cutting contract for the next 3 years and have included areas that had “disappeared” from others obligations and some which had slipped through the net in the past.

We have also agreed the Precept for the next financial year and again we have not increased it but reduced it by the rate of inflation.

Finally you will have noticed that the Jubilee Gardens look pristine and this is in no little way thanks to the work of Melvyn Creasy who has worked extremely hard to maintain and enhance the planting in the raised beds.

6. County Councillor’s Report.

County Councillor Colin Foulger reported that following on from the contract being cancelled for an incinerator being built in Norfolk, there are some discussions being held as to where the money will be coming from to pay the compensation/cancellation charges.

During the past year NCC have moved from a cabinet structure to one of Committee, the five main committees are made up of up to 17 members. There are still a number of subcommittees that are still to be finalised.

In reply to a question regarding a Cringleford/Thickthorn A47 flyover, Cllr Foulger stated that there had been a proposal for this although it was a good few years off and the money would come from the community infrastructure levy (CIL), which is a different fund to that paying for the Northern Distributor Route (NDR) that is a higher priority and for which there is some argument as to whether the Dereham end of the NDR will be completed.

There was some discussion regarding whether this calls into question the Greater Norwich housing strategy and whether this would put added pressure on SNC for additional housing. It was pointed out that if Mulbarton is allocated more housing then there will be no CIL payments to the Parish Council.

Cllr Herbert stated that he thought compulsory purchase orders may be made to enable the Long Stratton bypass to go ahead.

7. District Councillor's Report.

Following an explanation of CIL and the effect of a Neighbourhood Plan and that strict rules govern what the money can be spent on Cllr Legg presented his report for the year:

The Councils strategy for the past year has been to generate income in order to counter the reduction in Rate Support Grant, etc. from Central Government. By this means it has been possible to hold the District Councils part of Domestic Rates precept at the same level. It is anticipated that it will not be necessary to increase the precept over the next few years.

Income has been increased from The New Homes Bonus and investment in commercial property. It is proposed to develop housing for rental on the open market in Poringland and Long Stratton. The Building Control function has been taken "in house". It has been expanded so as to offer a service to a number of other Local Authorities.

The Council has exceeded its target of providing 500 affordable homes in three years. The Home Options Scheme is currently being reviewed. The number of applicants is now about 640 which is a considerable decrease since the scheme was started. Many long standing empty homes have been brought back into occupation.

New machinery is being installed at the Recycling Centre which will widen the scope of materials that can be recycled to include glass and tetrapaks, etc.

The Councils Site Specific Allocation Document for housing has been completed and forwarded for Government approval. This includes the 180 houses which have outline Planning Permission in the Flordon Long Lane area. Planning approval is currently being sought for the "reserved matters" of the

development. This includes the design and layout of the scheme together with the associated infrastructure. It appears that there are no proposals for new General Medical Services for the village.

The Community Infrastructure Levy came into operation on 1st May. This will affect all building work in varying degrees. Parish Councils will be entitled to receive an allocation from the receipts. The use will be strictly controlled and will not be available to defray Council Tax.

Councillor Herbert explained that the development on Long Lane was given planning permission prior to the introduction of CIL and as a result there will be no money available to the Parish Council, had CIL been in place the Parish Council would have got circa £270,000. He also reported that South Norfolk Council had again this year not increased council tax, in the last eight years it has increased once.

There followed a discussion about the Greater Norwich Development Partnership and the five year land supply, Cllr Legg stated that the target was not being met mainly because of Broadland Council. Cllr Herbert stated that he understood that if the join core strategy was not meet then this could be a disaster as all would have to go back to stage one. Cllr Foulger stated that 300 more houses in Wymondham were being considered on the basis that Broadland would not achieve their amount.

Following a question from Mr Mickleburgh, it was confirmed by the District Councillors that there would be no money from the long lane development for the Village Hall. The only recipient of the S106 would be the Schools.

8. Neighbourhood Plan Committee report.

Cllr Leigh read out the following report on behalf of the **Mulbarton Neighbourhood Planning Team:**

Mulbarton Neighbourhood Plan - Note for Annual Parish Meeting - Note by John Joyce

Nationally, regionally and in Norfolk there is pressure for more houses. The Long Lane development shows that Mulbarton is not immune from that pressure. There will be further pressure in the future, either from a revision of South Norfolk's Local Plan or from a speculative developer. Mulbarton needs to be ready.

A good Neighbourhood Plan is our best defence. The District Council (South Norfolk Council) will have to take the plan into account in reaching decisions about future housing and development. Whilst we cannot stop future development we can influence what form it takes. The Parish Council can best represent local views if residents tell us what they regard as important.

The process for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan is set out by government and we have to follow it, although there is significant flexibility about the content of the Plan. The key stages are:

- *Defining our neighbourhood*
- *Identifying what the issues are*
- *Deciding what we are trying to achieve*
- *Prepare a draft Plan*
- *Formally consult the public and specified bodies*
- *An independent examination*
- *A referendum of all residents*
- *Formal adoption of the Plan*

We have made a good start:

- *A Neighbourhood Plan Committee has been established – John Joyce is the chairman with Marina Carter, Jon Herbert, Nigel Legg, Geoff Kitchen and Steve Sewell as Committee members.*
- *The neighbourhood has been defined as Mulbarton. It is currently going through the formal approval process of designation.*
- *A local firm of professional planners, called Small Fish, have been retained to give professional advice.*
- *We are undertaking several stages of consultation:*
 - *Letters/e-mails were sent to all businesses asking for views in late 2013.*
 - *Informal views were gathered at the village Christmas Fayre in December 2013. Well over 200 people visited the stand.*
 - *A questionnaire is being developed to give all households an opportunity to give us their views*

The Committee has worked very hard to get us to this stage and I would like to put on record my thanks to each of them.

The next stage is to send out the questionnaire, which is planned for June.

Based on the responses, the team will draft a Plan over late summer, with a view to consulting residents over the autumn and winter. South Norfolk Council will organise the independent inspection and the referendum, probably early in 2015.

The Plan cannot go forward for formal adoption unless there is a majority in favour of it at the referendum. John Joyce Chairman – Mulbarton Neighbourhood Plan Committee Chairman

Cllr Herbert explained the referendum process for a Neighbourhood Plan. It was also confirmed that Cllr Sewell had been successful in applying for a grant on behalf of the Neighbourhood Team which would contribute towards costs of the process.

9. Reports from local groups and organisations.

Cllr Leigh introduced the new **Parish Rector, Rev Adrian Miller** to the audience. Rev Miller stated that he was enjoying Mulbarton and the other three villages that he has responsibility for and that there were several open events at the Rectory/Church over the coming weeks that all were invited to. Rev Miller went on to explain a “who cares” initiative being championed by 70 plus Norfolk churches designed to give an understanding of issues in communities and how the Church can best serve all within the community.

It was decided that the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire collection points could also be used to collect the “who cares” postcard size returns.

Cllr Leigh read out the following report on behalf of **Mr Malcolm Court, representing Mulbarton Scouts**, who was unable to attend at the last minute:

Just to say on behalf of the Scout Group many thanks for all the help that the council have given them over the last year and for the lease on the extra piece of land, we have been pleased to take part in village events that have taken place, we had a very successful firework night and the Scout sections have enjoyed many varied activities over the past year, our numbers are slightly down on last year but recently are beginning to pick up again as always one of our problems is getting enough adult help and would welcome anyone who would like to come along to help those children that belong to one of the largest youth organisations in the world. Once again thanks for your help and apologies I cannot attend the meeting.

Mr Tony Jenkins – on behalf of **MALGA** – began by thanking the Parish council for their help and encouragement of the group; the Swamp allotments, now in their third year, has full occupancy and the nearer Meadows site is settling down well after its first year. Mr Jenkins thanked Fergus & Geoff for all their support and the Parish Councils “secret weapon” Cllr Leek for her help and support especially with new allotment holders. Malga currently has 40 plus members and progress on applying for grants towards putting water onto the allotment sites is going well. Mr Jenkins concluded with a request for any spare hedging plants that the tree warden may have in the future.

Cllr Leigh read out the following report on behalf of **Mulbarton WI**:

MULBARTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE - REPORT TO MULBARTON PARISH MEETING 2014

Mulbarton WI continues successfully with a membership of 44 ladies from Mulbarton, Swardeston and Flordon.

Meetings are usually held on the 3rd. Monday of each month at 7-30pm in the Village Hall. There are 11 meetings each year and a Summer Outing in August.

Events and speakers at meetings during 2013 included Norwich Food Bank, Prevention of Coronary Heart Disease, A Fashion Show, Tips from the Body Shop, Maddermarket Theatre Costumes and the History of Pensthorpe.

During 2014 we have already enjoyed a portrait of Queen Victoria, Food for Joy and Climbing to Everest Base Camp.

Over the past year visits have been made to the Van Dal Shoe Factory and Radio Norfolk and we look forward to a tour of the Stanford Training Area in late April.

Our August trip was to Woolterton Hall and this year we shall go to Audley End.

2013, being our 30th year, was celebrated by an Open Afternoon on June 1st, to which everyone was invited to learn more of the WI. Displays showed the history of the National and Norfolk WI as well as Mulbarton's many past and present achievements and activities. We are very grateful to Terry Burchell for producing a DVD celebrating our 30 years.

Our Garden Club meets monthly and the Craft Group, which is an offshoot from the WI, raised £300 for local children's charities.

Our November Autumn Fayre attracted much interest and we were very pleased to share in helping with catering for the Mulbarton Christmas Event.

Anyone who wishes to know more about the WI or is interested in membership please contact:

Irene Eagle 570866 / Alice Lince 578390. (Alice Lince March 26th. 2014)

Cllr Leigh read out the following report on behalf of **Mr Rod Barker – Tree Warden**

Over the past four years the Mulbarton Parish Council has planted over 350 yards of hedging and trees in the village. This has been achieved at no cost to Mulbarton Parish as the hedging and trees were supplied free of charge by South Norfolk District Council to tree wardens of the participating villages all over Norfolk.

Around the children's play area at the Meadows (bottom of Cuckoofield Lane) 135 yards of hedging was planted, out of the hundreds of hedging planted we only had to replace about 30 this year which didn't survive which was a very good success rate.

There were 60 yards of hedging planted along the road side of the allotments at the Swamp on the Norwich road which was another success thanks to the allotment holders. This can be seen and appreciated by all as you drive into Norwich.

This year, 155 yards of hedging and about a dozen trees were planted in and around the new boundary area of the Scout & Guide Headquarters. Thanks to all the parents and scouts who worked very hard on the day.

Hopefully all this hedging and trees will last for years to come and will be appreciated by future generations, birds, insects and all sorts of wildlife.

Cllr Leigh reported that Mr Barker on behalf of the Parish Council would continue to apply to SNC for hedging plants for use around the village. In answer to a question concerning Ash dieback, Cllr Leigh said he was aware of two potentially effected trees at the Meadows and would liaise with Mr Barker about the process should they need removing.

Cllr Leigh read out the following report on behalf of **Jill Wright:**

1. *Please give my **apologies** – I'm afraid that this year I'm unable to attend as I am hosting a meeting that I couldn't move as last Monday was a Bank Hol and the following Monday I'm away on holiday..... (I rarely miss!)*
2. **Congratulations and THANK YOU** for the Christmas Fayre – a great event that brought people together. I did send comments and ideas for the future – maybe invite more at the Annual Meeting.
3. **Comment/Q 1** – dog mess ;-(groan and grrrrr. But I don't think we'll ever win – I wish I could catch the owner(s) who leave the mess near the Long Lane bus stop (there is always some there, and it's opposite a bin!). BUT – any chance of more frequent collections of the bins that are used? The one on the Common is currently overflowing.... (Though I have seen people dump big carrier bags in the one in B'field Lane – presumably after clearing up their own garden. No wonder the bins get overfull!)
4. **Comment/Q 2** – what has happened to the PROMISE made when plans for the new estate (Mulberry Gardens) were passed which said that Cuckoofield Lane would be completely resurfaced after the drainage had had time to settle (= drainage from that huge underground overflow tank) and the heavy lorries were no longer going to the site. PLEASE don't let the developers get away with not doing it, or just flinging some tar and stones at it without properly levelling the surface.
5. **PARISH NEWS** continues to be delivered to every home – we currently print 1600 copies. The summer issue is being printed this very week and as editor I had a real struggle to fit everything in. So apologies in advance for small print and cutting out some pictures. We are now considering adding another page, the cost of which would be largely covered by adverts. However, we are grateful for the subsidy received from the Parish Council to enable the magazine to develop, and we are hugely grateful to all our volunteer distributors.
6. **MULBARTON HERITAGE GROUP** has not met in the past year as no-one came forward to help with organising or with ideas for meetings. When either or both of these materialise we may arrange further meetings. Items of local interest, including artefacts and files of photos, have been taken to the Parish Office for safe-keeping. 'The Book of Mulbarton' is still in print – Jill Wright has copies at 22 Birchfield Lane, who is also the person to approach with ideas to kick-start the Heritage Group again.

Cllr Leigh explained that the village already has 13 doggie bins that the Parish Council pays to have emptied at considerably cost. In response to comment/Q2, Cllr Leigh was unable to comment as this was before his time in the village.

Mrs Marina Carter – Village Website – began by thanking Cllr Munks for his technical support in maintaining the village website which is currently showing 50 hits a day and the information email goes out to 200 plus residents. Mrs Carter reported that update sheets had been produced for the Welcome Booklets and were available this evening and from the Parish Council office. Cllr Leigh thanked Mrs Carter for her efforts in maintaining the website.

10. Any other business.

It was noted that the plans for the Long lane development were to be discussed at the ordinary Parish Council meeting that was to follow on from this meeting. A starting date for the development is not known as it still needs to go before the full planning committee at SNC. Cllr Legg stated that he would be surprised if there was any building started this year.

Mr Andy Shannon – reported that the Mulbarton Wanders and Belles Football clubs had had a very successful season. Four of the men's teams and the ladies team were promoted with the men's A team winning the cup and the ladies winning their league. There are currently 15 teams across all age groups.

Mr Mick Sutcliffe – VHMC – stated that the social club offered support to the football club and had good membership numbers. He hoped that going forward the new representative from the Parish Council would sit down and talk with him. Mr Sutcliffe reported that the village hall is booked out most of the time and achieving £40,000 turnover, although support and money was still needed.

The meeting closed at 8.16pm.