

MULBARTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Mulbarton Annual Parish Meeting held on
on Monday 13th May 2013 at 7.30pm.

Councillors present:-

Peter Leigh – Chairman	Phil Gardner
Steve Sewell	Peter Munks
Jon Herbert	Beverley Leek
Mark Standley	Claire Smithson

In attendance:

PCSO Darrin Sore, representatives from various Village organisations and several residents. District Councillor Legg was a late arrival.

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.

Mrs Burgess representing the WI

Mr Burgess representing Short Mat Bowls club.

Mrs Marina Carter – Village webmaster

Mr Rod Barker – Parish tree warden.

Anne Hackett – Hetherset District Lions

3. Police Report.

PCSO Darrin Sore reported that for the last month there was one report of alleged assault and three incidents of noise, nuisance and antisocial behaviour relating to the Jubilee Gardens area of the village.

For the last 12 months, PCSO Sore reported that there had been 39 recorded crimes against the previous year (2011/12) of 81. The previous year's figures included a number of break-ins to cars and caravans and with these taken out there was still a reduction of 20 recorded crimes year on year.

Whilst graffiti has been a problem in the village recently, the Police have identified a possible offender in Hetherset.

In response to questions from residents, PCSO Sore responded:

- Parking on Common Land - although poles had been put down around the school and surgery it appears people have found other areas to park on Common land. PCSO Sore explained that the SNC Enforcement Office had recently visited the area and that the Parish Council would be installing some more poles to ensure child safety around parked cars in the area.
- Parking on footpaths – the rule of thumb is that enough space needs to be left for a wheelchair or double buggy to get passed. PCSO Sore explained that a common sense approach needs to be taken and although there have been problems in the Broomfield area the situation was not as bad as in City locations. Parking issues are not generally a Police matter although they can give advice; enforcement is dealt with by either an Enforcement Officer from SNC or Traffic Police.
- Crime figures – in response to whether the recorded figures for the last year were typically of a village of Mulbarton's size, PCSO Sore responded that the figure were comparable to similar sized villages and there had been no "serious" crimes, just crimes of a certain nature.

PCSO Sore went on to report that his Beat Manager, PC Glen Hambling, had been carrying out static observations near The Rosary in response to concerns about HGVs using the village as a cut through, as there had been no HGVs observed in this area they would be looking at other areas of the village and at East Carlton.

PCSO Sore concluded by thanking the Parish Council for their co-operation over the last 12 months.

4. To confirm and sign the minutes of The Annual Parish meeting held 21st May 2012.

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

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

Chairman's Annual Report

Again another busy year for the Council - we've had our good moments and we have had our bad moments.

On the down side we have been unfortunate to lose our longest serving Councillor Charlie Yallop in June last year and to compound our misfortunes we lost our extended fight against the unwanted development of Long Lane. Although the Parish Council received S106 money from the developers of Mulberry Gardens that paid for the Village Hall extension there will be no money from this latest development.

On the positive side we have a new Clerk - Anne, who has been with us officially since November last year but has been helping us out since August last year. She has been a most welcome addition to the team and is respected by all the Councillors for her professionalism and great inter personal skills.

We also welcome a new Councillor – Phil Gardener, who is a most active member and along with Councillor Standley has put a lot of work into the new maintenance schedule for the Common, including the ponds work - some of which has been done and some will be on going over the next two years.

Another notable loss to the community has been the retirement of our Vicar Jess Stubenbord, who after 20 years' service decided to retire to the North Norfolk coast. The Council presented Jess with a winter painting of St Mary's, commissioned with local artist Chris Scales.

Work achieved over the past twelve months.

1. The Jubilee Gardens- many thanks to Beverley for her work in completing the Project and for her on-going commitment to its maintenance
2. Installation of extra play equipment at the Meadows - thanks to Claire for her work in getting a contract in place and executing it expeditiously and to budget.
3. We have also put into use the new allotment area at The Meadows and our thanks goes to Robert Preston for his help in getting the area into a fit state so that the new allotment holders could go straight into production. This could only be achieved with the close co-operation of MALGA and we thank Tony and his fellow members for their outstanding contribution to both getting the thing up and running and for their support in maintaining the Jubilee Gardens.
4. We have replanted the hedge around the play area at the Meadows and our thanks to our Tree Warden Rod and Melvyn Creasy for their efforts in this.
5. In collaboration with the Police we have worked to get money for the new skate park and also tried to remedy the parking problems outside the Doctors' surgery and the School. It an ongoing problem and we have had a request from Darrin to extend our "logging works" to prevent people parking in the tree area.
- 5 We have cleaned out the Village Pond in partnership with SNC and the Norwich Fringe Project. It has attracted both praise and criticism – but I guess that's what we expect when we embark on these sorts of things. If people cast their minds back it is in the same state as it was in the mid-eighties and as one long term resident said it looked great to see it back to its former self.
6. We have also worked closely with the Scouts to release further land for their use and also in resolving the on-going waste water/sewage problem from their headquarters. Thanks to Steve and Phil for their work in this area.
7. We have added an additional noticeboard located at Mulberry Gardens and also increased doggy bins and grit bins in response to residents' requests. The Parish Council spends over £700 emptying doggy bins annually.
8. Also thanks to Peter for maintaining the website and to Jon for helping out in the transition from Caroline to Anne.

Financial

We were successfully audited last year - the increased costs being attributable to our large spend associated with the Village Hall extension. The external auditor was happy with our control of our finances.

We have just completed our yearly return for the financial year 2012/2013 and these will be submitted to our internal auditor Carole Jowett over the next week or so, these can then be approved at our next PC meeting on the 3rd June. Our thanks to Anne for all her efforts in getting them ready, especially as this is her first year with us.

Our finances are in good shape and we are confident we can fund our on-going regular commitments as well as to special projects we have committed to i.e. Neighbourhood Development Plan and the new skate park for the coming year. If any residents have ideas for projects that the Parish Council could support then please forward them via the Clerk.

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 earlier on this 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 while they continue to operate as volunteers.

We will be reviewing our on-going grass cutting contract, which is due for renewal at the end of October.

Objectives and aims for the coming year

1. To complete the skate park project (we have secured £25,000 in grants and along with the contribution from the Parish Council we have enough to do the work). There is a Pop-Up Café this Friday for the 12-19 years old in the village to get together to help clean up the existing area.
2. To carry on our work associated with the ponds and the Common.
3. To progress the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Thanks to those that are now coming forward to help with this, your input and support is appreciated. The idea is to produce our own village plan which will be on-going until June 2014 when it will go out to referendum.
4. To make the Christmas Fayre a success. We were unable to secure the services of the SA but are looking at alternative sources of music. Local groups that have pledged support for this are , The Scouts, WI, Cricket Club, Football Club, the gym club and Hanover Gardens, MALGA. If anyone can help or wants to get involved please contact us as soon as possible.

6. County Councillor's Report.

Cllr Colin Foulger was not present at the meeting but is expected at the next Parish Council meeting on 2nd June 2013.

7. County Councillor's Report.

As Cllr Legg had been delayed at a SNC meeting, Cllr Leigh read out a prepared statement from Cllr Legg:

“Housing: The major event affecting the village in the last year has been the granting of outline planning permission for 180 homes at Long Lane. Many residents opposed the application, however South Norfolk Councils Planning Committee felt obliged to approve the application under the Governments five year land supply rules. Refusal of the application would almost certainly have led to a recommendation for approval on appeal at considerable cost to Council Tax payers.

The Councils Home Options Policy for the Housing Register has been operating for a year. The number of applicants on the housing register has reduced from some 3400 to 642. This means the Councils Housing Officers are able to devote much more time to individual applicants needs and at the same time being able to offer realistic time scales for housing provision. Some new categories have been added such as those serving in the Armed Forces and who were previously excluded. The Policy is currently being reviewed and adjustments are to be made.

The Site Specific Allocation (which includes Long Lane) have mostly been set. There is a last chance of comment, before the plans are considered by The Council at its June meeting.

Finance: there was no increase in Council tax this year. It is hoped that there will be no increase next year. The Council proposes to use substantial amounts of its reserves to promote growth and employment in The District and to raise income in order to prevent rises in fees and taxes.

Environment: The Council proposes to delegate much of the responsibility of the maintenance of the common to the Parish Council. Legal moves to deregulate the land at the Doctors surgery “car park” and that fronting the village hall have been ongoing some years. The issues are complex but I am hopeful that a land swap might be achieved within the next year. This would allow those areas to be properly surfaced.

New pavement sweepers have been purchased and are already operating in the locality.”

8. Mulbarton Allotments.

Mr Tony Jenkins on behalf of MALGA, thanked the Chairman for his kind words earlier and then went on to say how much they appreciate the support that has been given by the Parish Council in increasing the allotment areas and that the quality and standard of the Meadows site is magnificent and that thanks should also be given to Robert Preston for his support. The north and south sites both look good and they were amenities that would last many years.

Mr Jenkins reported that thanks to Geoff and Fergus at MALGA their membership is now heading to 50 plus.

Mr Jenkins complemented MPC on their secret weapon – Cllr Leek and wanted to take this opportunity to thank her for all her help and support.

9. Play area – future projects.

Cllr Leigh reported that Cllr Standley is championing raising additional funds to put extra play equipment into The Meadows. The annual RoSPA inspection is due in the next few weeks. Cllr Leigh reported that the control of green spaces in Mulberry Gardens is the responsibility of South Norfolk Council and they

have recently installed some second hand equipment onto one of these areas. It is believed that these areas may be passed over to MPC to control.

10. Reports from local groups and organisations.

The Scouts: Mr Vic Rayward –Smith on behalf of the Scouts, thanked the Parish Council for all their support over the last year. He explained that the Scout Group had had some sad losses during the year, Charlie Yallop, Dale Court and Peter Catton.

Despite the playgroup leaving the premises last year, the Scout Hut has had a new kitchen and toilets installed, the sewage pump has been fixed and that now they were being offered a new lease for more land outside the Hut they will be able to offer more outside activities. He was pleased to announce that all sections of Scouts and Guides are full, although they are currently finding it difficult to recruit more volunteers. There is a new mother and toddlers group now using the premises and last year's firework display was another success. The Scout Group enjoyed working with the other local groups on the Jubilee Celebrations and are looking forward to working with the Parish tree warden on planting the area outside the Hut and on finalising plans for extending their headquarters.

Rev Dawn Davidson: as the assistant minister at Mulbarton Church, Rev Dawn thanked the Parish Council for their invite to address the meeting and explained that having been ordained four years ago she was now filling the gap after Jess left earlier in the year. Rev Dawn explained that the Church has a process to follow in recruiting a new minister and that with neighbouring parishes of Flordan, Hethal and Bracon Ash the vacancy would shortly be advertised. Although it was possible a new Rector could be in place by Christmas it was possible the process could take two to four years.

Rev Dawn explained that Harvest House, which was originally a Cowman's House, was brought by the Church twenty plus years ago as there was no Church Hall. The building is used a lot by the church and children's groups, it is also let to other churches and for meetings and as they have outgrown their space they are now trying to extend.

Village Website: As Mrs Marina Carter was unable to attend the meeting, Cllr Peter Leigh read a prepared statement: "The SNC Community litter pick was organised by Celia Viner on Saturday 13th April and in two hours volunteers collected 26 bags of rubbish, 8 recycling and about 130 glass bottles as well as other larger items, just on and around The Common, The Village Hall complex and Orchard Park.

Thank you to the Parish Council for the £120pa towards my time etc. running the village website – it is quite basic but easy for me to run as a volunteers, thanks to Cllr Peter Munks who helps with my occasional questions; it gets a daily average of 60 visits and around 2,000 per month.

www.mulbarton.info

The welcome booklet is also gratefully received by newcomers to the village – please let me know of any; I can be contacted via the village website – there are also some in the Parish office. Have a good meeting"

Cllr Leigh thanked Marina for the commitment she shows to the website and Welcome booklets.

Heritage Group: Mrs Gill Wright, on behalf of the PCC spoke briefly about the meeting that they had had with the Parish Council last October and that unfortunately no more meetings have been booked due to other events.

With regards to the Heritage Group, Mrs Wright explained that storage facilities were now needed to archive artefacts belonging to the village so that they were safe and available for others to use. The Heritage website has temporarily been pulled by the Forum Trust who are reviewing it's future use.

Cllr Leigh responded that the Parish Council would look at options for storage.

11. Any other business.

Cllr Leigh introduces District Councillors Nigel Legg and Jon Herbert.

Resident Dr Boyd and neighbours raised a number of issues concerning the Pond. These primarily concerned the removal of shrubs possibly leading to increased numbers of fishermen on the Pond; increased anti-social behaviour and increased rubbish being left in the area.

In response the Council made the following points: enquiries are being made to see if a closed season could be introduced; all anti-social behaviour needs to be reported to Norfolk Constabulary on 101; no parking signs could be erected but as it is Common Land there is no way of enforcing this.

Councillor Leigh thanked everyone for attending and that the Parish Council meeting would follow for those that wished to stay.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.