

Haslingfield Parish Council
Notes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 23rd May 2016

There were 29 members of the public present.

Apologies were received from District Councillor Doug Cattermole, Christine Branch, Jay Cole and Deborah Snelling.

Notes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2015 were approved; proposed by Liz Heazell seconded by John Miller. Copies were available on request. Copies of this years' Finance Reports and Chairman's Report were distributed.

Matters arising from 2015 Notes - none

Chairman's Report 2015-2016 by Bob Branch

'I start my report with thanks to all fellow councillors of 2015 – 2016 and our Parish Clerk and RFO Frances Laville for their work, help and support, and to other village folk who freely give of their time on various sub-committees and voluntary groups attached to or supported by the Council (HPC). We are starting this new Council year after an election process which saw six parish councillors nominated and returned unopposed. Unfortunately, we have lost five councillors who decided not to stand for reasons amongst which were time for studies, family commitments and work issues. A number of them will still participate in Council activities this year as volunteer members of committees and outside bodies, so their expertise will not be lost.

The main issues that the council have had to deal with in this past year have been planning issues, improvements to the Village Hall, the Road Safety Initiative and picking up some pieces of work from the County and District (SCDC) councils which they have deemed insufficiently important to spend money on in this time of austerity.

On the planning front Grosvenor remain active in promoting their ideas for a Sports Village and houses in the Green Belt at Trumpington Meadows, despite confirmation of the Green Belt there in the Local Plan, which remains under review. We continue to work with neighbouring councils and other organisations to oppose this proposal, which involves another 500 houses in addition to the 1,200 already approved for Trumpington Meadows, and other proposed developments on the green belt around the Southern Fringe of Cambridge.

CEMEX were successful with their planning application for a development of 220 houses on the cement works site. This development will create further pressures on our village whilst planning rules prevent us from accessing any funds to mitigate the problems that will arise.

The village hall committee has recruited an architect to produce alternative plans for extending the village hall to provide more facilities. The results of this work will be available for review and consultation later this year.

More use is being made of the village website and we thank the website team for their great efforts in developing and maintaining the site.

Housing construction has continued in the part of the Trumpington Meadows development in the South Cambridgeshire District Council area within Haslingfield parish. As reported before, we are a village community, different from the suburbia of Trumpington Meadows, and our request for a Community Governance Review has been implemented by the District Council. The Stage 1 consultation ends on 13th June 2016 and we sent our consultation comments in after our parish council meeting last week. I the hope the outcome will be a

separate entity for the community governance of that part of Trumpington Meadows within SCDC.

We have had to go through many hoops in finalising traffic calming measures in Barton Road. There will be further consultation in the next few weeks once the design has been completed. What has emerged is not fully in accordance with HPC's desires, but current rules limit what can be done. There will be a final consultation local to Barton Road, since there has been no basic change in approach from what has been consulted on before. Drawings for the final works in Barton Road should be available for anyone who wishes to view them in the next week or two at the Chairman's house, by prior arrangement. Drawings covering Chapel Hill and Harston Road should be available later for a village wide consultation on the Phase 2 proposals.

There have been more complaints about school run parking which is a problem in villages all over South Cambridgeshire. We are in the process of setting up a working party involving HPC, the School, volunteers and the authorities, to try and agree some actions to improve the situation at the school. Lucian Hatfield is leading that effort.

More trees have been added in the Community Orchard in the Wellhouse Meadow, with help from Sylvia Armit and supporters, for which thanks. We always welcome the support of residents to work with the Council on projects to improve our village. You do not have to be on the Council to be involved!

The Council has continued working on plans, costs and structures for possible routes for a cycle path link from the village towards Cambridge. The attitude of some adjacent authorities has not always been helpful so Lucian Hatfield has been struggling nobly to work up a route acceptable to all.

Finally, I would ask you all to consider whether you might be interested in serving on the Parish Council, or whether you know someone who might consider doing so. We have the power to co-opt people to bring us up to strength. We have a careful interview procedure and reserve our rights not to appoint someone.'

Bob Branch welcomed any suggestions from residents for the Village Hall plans. A member of the public asked what the timescale was for the refurbishment of the building. Tony Adcock said the PC were looking at schemes, layouts and costs and would then decide if that's achievable. He said the earliest the building could start would be sometime next year but there was no guarantee this would be possible and he didn't want to raise expectations unnecessarily. The main requirements for the Village Hall were the need for an upgraded kitchen and more space for committee rooms and storage.

Parish Council Accounts presented by Tony Adcock. Copies had been circulated.

The Parish Council has reserves of £93,246.87.

There had been an increase in private bookings for the Village Hall and, of the total income; £2000 was spent on fire protection equipment and £1900 on replacing the old white tables. There was a deficit of £2000 in the year and the Village Hall reserves had dropped from £7515.32 to £5418.82.

Tony Adcock said Section 106 money depends on income from new builds, and none would be received from the development at Trumpington Meadows, as it has to be spent at the

location where the work takes place. However, the PC is hoping to get some S106 money towards the proposed new cycle route.

The building refurbishment is to be put on hold until a plan is in place. It would make sense to roll the new water system into the project. The Village Society was concerned about the unreliability of the PA system, where people can currently pull plugs out, and said ideally it should be properly rewired. Jenny Jullien said it would be put as an item on the Agenda.

Bob Branch said a meeting dealing with Neighbourhood Watch and general security would be held at the Village Hall tomorrow between 10.30am – 12pm, with Theresa Harrold. He also asked for feedback on the Local Government Boundary Committee consultation, dealing with the Electoral Review, which is available on the website.

Warden Scheme by Jan Date

Jan Date gave an interesting talk on the Warden Scheme. She said a Parish Newsletter article had described a ‘Miss Brown’, who had been an active lady in her late seventies with no close relatives. After a minor car accident her spine was damaged. She was allowed home but couldn’t do any lifting or gardening etc. She was keen not to have agency carers. The Warden Scheme was glad to step into the breach and provided a welcome chat, helped her with tasks and gave general advice. She soon recovered.

A ‘Mr Green’ was almost ninety. He lived alone after his wife was admitted to a nursing home. Both sons lived abroad. Through joining the scheme he was able to join in with other community activities, as the Warden Scheme also provides a strong link into the community.

Jan Date asked people to make sure anyone they know in the village who might need the scheme is aware of it and thanked the Parish Council for their continued support. The Warden Scheme has been going for more than 30 years and has seven trustees – all members of the local community.

Car Scheme by Liz Heazell

Liz Heazell said the position regarding the car scheme has changed slightly since the Newsletter article. Two drivers have now gone on long-term sick and more support is needed. The Car Scheme can presently only cover medical type appointments. Since August they have been providing extra help, as two elderly gentlemen have been in hospital, so the scheme has been taking their wives to see them. Drivers are paid 30p per mile, plus 15p per mile from the county council. Taxis would be far too expensive to rely on regularly. The Car Scheme would be really pleased to hear from anyone willing to help with this important and worthwhile task.

Connections Bus by Christine Kipping

The Connections Bus is parked in the Car Park outside the Village Hall every week during term time. It has been coming to the village for over eleven years and has served 65 young people this year. Haslingfield Parish Council pays most of the costs, although Harlton also contributes a small proportion. Youngsters usually go back and forth from the Recreation Ground when the weather is fine. Quizzes and other entertainment takes place and there is a tuck shop run by five village volunteers, which saves having to employ another youth leader. The project is run by Alan Webb, who has two teenagers, and all sorts of topics are covered

including careers, sexual health, bullying, Star Wars, e-cigarettes, misuse of the 'rate my teacher' website etc.

For many this is the only facility now available that youth attend. The session starts at 4pm and is mainly attended by secondary school children and a few Year 6 primary school boys.

Speedwatch by Brian Robins, Cambridge Police Co-ordinator

Brian Robins is a retired Police Officer from the Met, where he has worked since 1972. He said that once you are in the Police 'family' it is difficult to be fully retired. Speedwatch has recently changed, as it wasn't fulfilling the needs of villagers, and in South Cambs it now has a very good record for dealing with speeding. Most South Cambs villages suffer from 'rat running' to avoid using routes such as the A14, A428 etc. with their associated traffic jams.

Speedwatch is mostly about educating people, as speeding adversely impacts on villages' quality of life, and follows up persistent speeders. Enforcement follow up is done by local Police, where James Sutherland, the Chief Inspector, has a very good reputation for sorting out local problems. Special Constables can write speed tickets, which PCSOs can't. To run successfully, a team of 5-6 people is needed to start off, with 3 people by the roadside at any one time. Most villages now have a Speedwatch team and their effectiveness depends on how much time is put in. Speeds tend to drop once drivers see the team, and they start to realise there might be a policeman with them.

Training will be given at Cambridge Police Station on a Saturday morning, where they will make sure the operation is undertaken safely. Speed checks will be sent in by email. Last year £15,000 letters were sent out, with only 2% as second timers. If a person is caught twice police will be sent out to visit them.

There are nearly 300 teams in the county, and there is evidence that the scheme really works. Police are trying to encourage villagers to purchase their own equipment, at a cost of £2400 + VAT. If shared with a nearby village this would be reduced to £1200.

Local volunteers are urgently needed in Haslingfield. A notice is to be put on the noticeboards and website with a brief outline saying how the scheme works. **Action FL**

Queen's 90th Birthday by Jenny Jullien

The Planning is now complete for the Queen's 90th birthday celebration weekend of 11th and 12th June, which is also incorporating the village Scarecrow Festival. The Program has gone to press and will be delivered to every household by the end of the month. The last big celebration in the village was 39 years ago, in 1977, when Haslingfield celebrated the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

Helpers are needed for the weekend, including people for marshalling, supervising the games, stewarding and clearing up after the event. People are also needed to supervise the running course, which will circuit High Street, Church Street and New Road, to make sure the runners stay safe. The race will be limited to 50 people for safety reasons. Residents are asked not to park cars around the village. Entry forms, including entries to the 'bake a cake' competition, will be found in the programs, or please email Jenny Jullien to say what you would like to do.

County Councillor's Report by Sebastian Kindersley

Sebastian Kindersley said the County Council had had a difficult year. It was a great privilege to be Chairman for the last 12 months and re-elected for the next 12 months. He found the role great fun and extremely interesting.

There were three big issues over the previous year – two from the County Council and one from the District Council.

Budget - The County Council now has no overall control and decisions are made by councillors in committees. The government has reduced the budget very significantly, allowing them to impose up to a further 2% on Council Tax. No budget was proposed by the Chairman and a debate took place which went on all day long. In the end a budget was agreed. They didn't take the 1.99% increase (amounting to £4.8 million) which the government allows. As a result footpaths, cycle ways etc. will get worse across the board. Children's special schooling, buses, social services and many other people will be impacted by the County Council's decision.

Devolution - The devolution debate continues. The government wants to merge services between Cambridge, Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk in return for an elected mayor, who could be someone from any area so would know nothing of South Cambs issues. Devolution should be about giving power to us, not taking it away and giving it to one person.

Local Plan - South Cambs District Council's Local Plan is in abeyance, which is having a huge impact on this area. Any policies in the last plan, such as village frameworks, have been effectively suspended. This allows planners to put in speculative developments for large supplies of houses, and the applications are coming in thick and fast. The infrastructure has not been provided and there is now more traffic, pressure on schools, medical centres etc. The Local Planning Inspectorate will resume in June, which will be binding by June 2017. It will hardly be worth having a Local Plan, as another plan will take place in 2018. 19,500 new houses have already been passed and it has been a very worrying time for all concerned.

Open Forum - The Chairman gave a maximum time limit of 3 minutes to each speaker.

Question: Barton Road residents were told that they'd be kept informed on Traffic Calming, but had been given no information. The original plan from last year was changed in order to remove a chicane by a Parish Councillor's house. We know nothing – what is happening?

Answer: John Miller said this had been a continuing topic in every Parish council meeting and Newsletter. The designs were done over a year ago. There had been further consultations with safety and audit teams, and also with Skanska. When they checked exits from driveways there were only three areas where you could safely put chicanes. It had taken an inordinate amount of time to go through the safety criteria and the whole project had been very complex and time consuming. He re-iterated that every Parish Council meeting is open to the public and said that often no members of the public were present. There will be a letterbox drop to every household in Barton Road soon.

Question: The Parish Council were thanked for all their hard work over the last year.

Answer: Bob Branch thanked him and all the residents for coming along to the meeting.

There were no further questions and the meeting closed at 9.50 pm.