

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Electorate

held in Queens Park, Daimler Avenue, Yaxley on 7th March 2016.

Present:- Councillor K Gulson – Chairman

Parish Clerk (Helen Taylor)

In Attendance: 12 Members of Yaxley Parish Council, 1 District Councillor and 4 Members of the Public.

1.0 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

2.0 Chairman's report

Mention was made of the elections held in May 2015 and the new faces and fresh ideas brought to Council. Through the year 2 Councillors had resigned and following the advertising of these posts, four candidates expressed a wish to become Councillors. Resulting in Philippa Crooke and James Reed being co-opted to the Council.

The Chairman observed that it had been another busy but interesting year.

The Parish Council had awarded grants for the free use of council facilities totalling to £5,530. Special consideration was given to those offering their services free to the village.

Mention was made of the work of all of our Parish Councillors who give their time and knowledge, working to deliver improvements within the village. Each councillor brings something different to the table to ensure a balanced view of subjects to be discussed.

3.0 Personnel – Chairman Andrew Wood.

The Bookings Clerks position had been filled by Sue Finch, bringing a wealth of knowledge from her previous role with Huntingdonshire District Council.

The ground maintenance team has continued with the maintenance programme improving and decorating Queens Park, the Pavilion and the Austin Hall this year. Other improvements include the introduction of hot and cold refreshments at Queens Park which has been a success on match days all thanks to Beryl Maltby the Parish Councils Caretaker.

Beverly Porter, the Finance Officer has restructured the Parish Council's operating cost reporting to such an extent that high cost elements can be focussed on and reductions made to allow improvements to facilities in a timely manner.

The administration of the day to day running of council and therefore responsible for delivering a major part of our ongoing cost reduction, keeping council informed of all new laws, regulations, liaising with District, County, various authorities and the village businesses and residents alike to name just a few goes to our clerk Helen Taylor.

The Council's workforce continue to rise to all challenges, helping improve our facilities and reduce costs to the benefit of the community. The Chairman's personal appreciation goes out to the whole workforce whose motivation and dedication in helping with the changes that are required to bring improvements to the Parish of Yaxley are a must.



1 | Page

4.0 Community Facilities - Chairman Graham Bellamy.

In referring to the Community Facilities Committee mention was made to the upgrade of the old sand based astro pitch to a 3G pitch. As a result bookings have increased and with a wider range of age groups using it and more recently an interest for a walking football session.

Work has started on improving the Queens Park pitches by verti draining to improve the drainage and playing surface, this work is ongoing.

Following discussions where local people were asked what improvements the council could make for the youth of the village a decision was taken to light up the Multi Activity lighting at night to allow free play in the facility. Following an inspection and upgrade of the lighting this work was completed in January.

Agreement has been reached on a junior play area for Middletons recreation ground and should be set for installation in the new financial year.

Work has commenced in the old cemetery, gravelling areas that have been hard to maintain. This will deliver long term cost savings with maintenance of the area.

The Council has continued to work with local groups and volunteers making improvements to our community. One group is the Yaxley Countryside Trust led by Reg Bingham and his small band of volunteers on a planting scheme, pruning and hedge laying in areas around the village.

Another is Des Watt with his scheme to improve footpath access for all between Yaxley and Holme. The first section at the Wykes has been met with approval. The Council hopes to continue with these and any other programmes in the coming year.

The Council has also collaborated with Fenland Trust in raising the funds for a defibrillator in the village. An application has been made to the British Heart Foundation for funding towards the machines.

One continual issues raised by the whole community and more recently even our younger residents, is that of dog mess. We have installed additional bins, used footpath spray signage and called in the Huntingdonshire Dog Warden who has been successful with prosecution in areas. But this remains a constant issue that defies sense or reason when a majority of the community are trying and succeeding to make marked improvements our village.

5.0 Property - Chairman Rodney Butcher.

As reported last year structural surveys have highlighted areas for maintenance to the chimney and bell tower on the Owen Pooley building due to their listed building status this work has been delayed and will now take place during the Easter break.

The Council has taken receipt of the new liveried vehicle, its cage gives an element of safety in transporting waste, security of tools whilst working on site and reduces drive time of our specialist vehicles.

6.0 Planning - Chairman Clive Thorne.

The planning committee continue to strive to ensure plans are in keeping with the needs of the village aspects. This committee meets every 2 weeks and attends District meetings when required therefore can be a very busy team of councillors.



7.0 Going forward -

The Chairman outlined the Council's action plan for next year including:-

Provision of adult external exercise equipment within the village

Improvement to Austin hall and council office

Village youth to assist with plans to extend the skate park

Support the Yaxley Festival with resource, facilities and sponsorship

Collaborate with The Fenland Trust over the heritage Trail through the village

Refurbishment of Queens park facilities heating and lighting

Mention was made of the difficulties being faced by the parish with certain services being cut by County and District and costs being passed down to parish level. More recently the decision to change the operational times of the streetlights in the coming year had added to the Council's budget as the decision was taken to leave them on grounds of safety and security.

8.0 Questions and Answers

The Chairman opened the floor to questions.

It was asked if the Council had any plans to extend the cemetery. In response it was explained that an area of land had been promised as part of the Great Haddon development but that this had been shelved. To develop a new cemetery would be an expensive outlay and would need to be budgeted for. It was reported that the Community Facilities Committee would discuss and if need be would contact the District Council for advice and support.

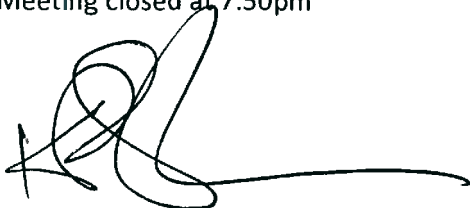
It was asked if any progress had been on the cycle path linking Farcet and Yaxley. In reply it was reported that work would start soon on the path.

It was asked whether there were any plans to finish the scout hut. It was advised that this is down to the Scouts and Guides Association.

Finally mention was made of the old brick pits next to the Ferndale Estate. O & H Hampton owned the land and had developed plans to create a nature reserve yet nothing had been started. Although the Council were not aware of any planned works the Clerk would raise it with the development company.

There were no further questions. The Chairman thanked all for attending.

Meeting closed at 7.50pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

