

ASHBY ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 2 May 2006 at 7.45 pm at Ashby and Thurton Village Hall

MINUTES

Present: Robert Todd (Chairman), Carole Powell, Mark Rolph, Terry Kitt and Edgar Hoddy.

Also Present: Linda Gray (Clerk), Adrian Gunson, County Councillor, Derek Blake, District Councillor and 18 Members of Public.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Peter Wright and Sarah Cook. Also apologies were received from Esther Thomas, Preschool and Wendy Premachandra, Tree Warden.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28 April 2005

A précis of the minutes were read out by the clerk, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairmans Report

Report by Robert Todd, Chairman.

Thanks were extended to all the Councillors who continue to support the Parish Council and to Linda Gray who had completed a year as clerk. The Councillors attendance rate was 88% for the year. County and District Councillors Adrian Gunson and Derek Blake also continue to support the village very well and try to attend each meeting, for which the Parish Council is appreciative. Support to the Village and helping local groups such as the Preschool are key to the objectives of the Parish Council.

Parish Plan was a very successful exercise and has already been used as evidence of resident's views in connection with the Local Development Framework.

Local Development Framework, It is highly unlikely that land at Ashby will be used in this Framework but the Parish Council will continue to be vigilant by making the communities views known.

Web Site, communication was also an issue that came out of the Parish Plan Questionnaires and the investigation into a Web site for Ashby St Mary is ongoing.

Homewatch was an issue that residents wanted resurrected and Mark Rolph will present the current position and way forward later in the agenda.

4. Financial Report

Report by Mark Rolph

For the year 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006 income £2,792.29 and expenditure £2,585.76.

The accounts therefore stand at a breakeven point as in previous years. The councillors discuss annually the amount of the precept and decided £2k (£8 per elector) is justified without increase. Income has increased due to Kerbside Adopter credits, these are credits received due to new recycling policies. Expenditure is higher due to costs of the publication of the Parish Plan, but there have been no further significant expenses.

Robert Todd ask the members of the public if the precept requires increasing or decreasing and if they considered the Parish Council to be using the funds to the advantage of the village. The public attending the meeting gave a very positive response and confirmed the Parish Council were using the funds available to the advantage of the village.

5. Parish Plan Report

Report by Robert Todd, Chairman.

The Parish Plan has been a success; very favourable comments have been received from residents and from South Norfolk Council. The Parish Council extend their thanks to the hard work and commitment of the committee lead by Sarah Cook and Mark Rolph.

The action plan in the back of the booklet identifies a way forward and requires updating on a regular basis. The results of the Parish Councils actions will be reported at each Annual Parish Meeting.

Some targets have been achieved already. The street signage on Ashby Road Thurton and Mill Road Ashby St Mary is in the process of being changed and will show where Thurton ends and Ashby St Mary starts. NHS Dentistry, a practice has now opened in Loddon. Homewatch was identified as an area most residents were interested and willing to join. Mark Rolph has a presentation detailing what has already been achieved and a way forward.

The Parish Plan has already been used as evidence of resident's views. The Parish Council were able to show South Norfolk Council that residents viewed further development in the village as unacceptable at a recent meeting concerning the Local Development Framework.

6. **Police Report**

Report by PC Sparkes. PC Lake sends apologies.

Crime figures

2005 – 3 Assaults

1 Criminal Damage

1 Attempted Burglary

2006 – No recorded crimes.

The division results of this sector were very good.

Youngsters seem to be a problem in many local villages as they tend to resent attending any organised events and just want somewhere to hang out. In smaller villages such as Ashby St Mary most people know each other and can keep on top of any problems.

Robert Todd asked if Police presence and visibility was to increase in the area, this was a resounding issue of concern from the Parish Plan questionnaires. The closure of the Loddon Police office was also the source of major concern and could the Parish Council and residents of Ashby St Mary help to influence the coverage in the area.

P C Sparkes replied that agreement for a Police contact point at Hobart High School has been agreed. This office will not be open for the public to visit, but will attract Police Officers to the area to make interviews and take rest breaks. The agreement also extends to 1 Full Time Police Officer and 2 Community Support Officers, who do not have the same power as a Police Officer but will increase the presence of the Police in the area. P C Sparkes went on to explain residents could contact the Police on a positive note concerning the crime figures and the presence of the Mobile Police Office in the area. The Mobile Police Office is happy to attend local events such as an annual fete in order for the community to meet with the members of the team and discuss local issues.

Mark Roph asked if the presence of a Home watch scheme in the area could reduce burglaries. P C Sparks was very positive concerning this point as he explained it is very possible to influence criminal behaviour if it is widely understood that a home watch scheme is in existence as it adds more eyes and ears to the community. He was unable to quantify how positive a scheme was as the Police only record crime that has happened and is unable to give any idea on how many crimes are stopped by a home watch scheme or indeed the presence of a Police Officer.

A member of the public was concerned with the amount of speeding in the Village. P C Sparkes remarked that this is an ongoing problem in small villages but the main offenders tend to be the locals. He will request an officer with a speed gun attends Ashby St Mary in the very near future.

7. **County Councillors Report**

Report from Adrian Gunson, County Councillor

Hobart High School building works started in December 05 on the Sports Hall and Coach Park are progressing well. The planning application for the All Weather pitch will be submitted after local consultation. Although building will continue in September the classrooms for the increased number of pupils will be finished.

Thurton School is included in the second phase of the schools programme. The planning permission will not be submitted until local consultation has taken place.

Closure of Loddon Police office. The Police office is due to close in 2008. Hobart High School has offered the Police a contact office on its premises. The school is in discussions with the Police authority. Community Support Officers could be introduced to Loddon.

First Bus Service. The service has improved but is not without problems.

Local Development Framework is the process to allocate building land in South Norfolk. Landowners were asked to submit the details of land available. 3 pieces of land were identified in Ashby St Mary, including one substantial proposed development. A letter of objection sent by the Parish Council was supported by the County Councillor on the grounds of lack of amenities, (Banks, Post Office, Doctors) and infrastructure. Consultation is ongoing.

River Chet. Work on bank erosion is complete; the footbridge at Hardley Flood is now open.

Highways. Attempts to obtain agreement to improve the main truck roads in Norfolk (A11 and A47) are ongoing.

The traffic light on Trowse bypass that gives priority to traffic leaving the A47 from Gt Yarmouth needs adjustment. The Owners the Highways Agency is not in agreement.

Northern Distributor Road around Norwich. The route for this new road has been agreed and will start at Thorpe and finish at the Fakenham Road to give a $\frac{3}{4}$ route. The last stretch of road from the Fakenham Road to the A 47 at Easton has had problems due to the River Wensum being included in a special area of conservation. Therefore the road from Lenwade to Honningham will receive improvements only.

Loddon bypass has completed its 3-year programme of resurfacing. Footpaths in Loddon are being updated to promote walking in the village.

Whitlingham County Park, the barn has been converted to a visitor centre and café and will host a variety of events this year.

Questions.

What is more important to the County Council the dualling of the A11 or the Northern Distributor Road around Norwich?

Adrian Gunson replied that the Government had decided both were important and that both will start construction around the same time 2011 to 2012.

8. **District Councillors Report**

Report from Derek Blake, District Councillor

Gypsy and travellers sites. The proposed site at Denton was not accepted. The Government has reviewed the situation and decided that South Norfolk needs to provide 1-½ travellers sites per ward. The District Councillor was against this proposal.

Local Government reorganisation. Parish Councils may receive more responsibilities in this reorganisation.

Local Development Framework Not all details of land will be developed and Ashby St Mary has a good case to refuse development on grounds of views of residents detailed in its Parish Plan.

South Norfolk Council Web Site receives continual updating. Planning applications are available on the site.

Credit Card Fraud; please do not divulge your 3 digit security number printed on the signature strip on the reverse of your card to anybody on the phone. With this information fraudsters can make payments from your account. Another scam includes residents having to ring a number to have a parcel delivered. If you ring the number your account will be debited.

Police; have been called to several burglaries that have taken place at remote properties.

Computer Courses, Hobart High School, were very well supported and oversubscribed. The courses will be run again soon.

Wren committee, Derek Blake the District Councillor is a representative on the committee, one of the main aims of the committee is to allocate funds in the form of grants to local groups.

9. Ashby and Thurton Playing Field Committee Report

Report by the chairman of the Village Hall Committee.

Discussions concerning the possible relocation of the school to the Village Hall site have dominated the year. The result being that the school will be modernised and extended on its existing site.

Following this news the management committee of the Village Hall has put together a programme of repairs and renovations, and thanks the Parish Council for their full support. Funding for this programme is available through grants.

The Village Hall fees will be increased in line with the present costs of utilities. A chair carrier will be purchased and there will be a new place to store the chairs. The committee is in a state of change, as both the Treasurer J Priest and the Secretary P Cook will retire this year.

10. Election of representative to serve on Village Hall Management Committee

As in previous years this will be decided at the AGM held on 18 May 2006.

11. BYRUS Report

Included with the report from the Church.

12. Church Report

BYRUS, All youth groups continue to be well supported under the leadership of Jacqui Hill the full time youth worker.

The Church, also experiences good attendance from the village and surrounding villages for joint services. A number of special events took place last year including "light and love" service for the bereaved and a service for Trafalgar Day.

The chancel area in the church was rearranged; this has enhanced the use of the church for a wider community use.

Thanks are extended to the PCC for all their help, support and fundraising throughout the year. Also thanks are to go to both Jenny Sproule and Wendy Premachandra the churchwardens.

13. Other village organisation reports

Tree Warden.

Report by Wendy Premachandra.

The Clerk read the report, as Wendy was unable to attend the meeting.

A new hedge is to be planned on a stretch of Chapel Road in November. There is also a local initiative to identify and record ancient trees, focusing on trees that are particularly significant to a village. Wendy would be most grateful to hear from anyone in Ashby St Mary who knows of any interesting trees in the village including any interesting stories or anecdotes associated with them.

Thurton and Ashby Pre School

Apologies from Esther Thomas Chairman

Robert Todd explained that the Pre School is experiencing some financial difficulties due to declining numbers.

The Parish Council will be reviewing the accounts at the next meeting 18 May 2006 with a view to a donation.

14. **Homewatch**

Report by Mark Rolph

Homewatch was identified from the Parish Plan questionnaires as an area that the community is very interested. In the past year the Parish Council have been instrumental in revitalising and extending the existing scheme of Neighbourhood Watch. Invitations to join the new Homewatch scheme were distributed with the Parish Plan to 125 households and so far there have only been 19 responses including 7 volunteer co-ordinators. Please can residents respond to the Homewatch scheme invitation even if they are involved with the previous Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in order that information can be collected together? The next step is for co-ordinators to agree with their members how best to cascade the information received from Norfolk Police, either telephone or email. More co-ordinators are also required. When involved with a Homewatch scheme house insurance can attract discounts. There are also a number of security measures available at reduced rates. The community need to be involved to make this work. Your Parish Needs You.

15. **Any Other Business**

Brown Wheelie Bin Scheme this new scheme is to introduce bin for garden waste and will attract a fee of around £ 40.00 a year.

Parish Plan will be available on disc for a small fee and will be available soon.

Signage in the Village, there is some confusion for delivery drivers and visitors concerning where Thurton ends and Ashby starts. The Parish Council has contacted the District Council concerning this matter and are waiting for new signs to be erected.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm