

## LINDSEY PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting for Lindsey was held on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2014 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. The Chairman Mr. D. Waldron welcomed the following Parish Councillors: Mr. C. Arthey; Mrs. R. Howe; Mrs. F. Moore; Mr. P. Stroud and Mr. A. Sturgeon as well as Mrs V Waples (Clerk); District Councillor Bryn Hurren and County Councillor James Finch.

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R. Corcoran.
2. The minutes of the previous meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013 were approved by all present and signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council as a true and accurate record.
3. Ongoing matters:
  - i) Village Events - the Village Sign had been officially unveiling on 7th July at a Village Event which was attended by many from the village.

The following brief reports were then given as follows (full transcripts of which are kept on file).

4. MR JAMES FINCH - COUNTY COUNCILLOR - Mr. Finch was invited to submit his report in which he thanked the Chairman and the Parish Council for the welcome always extended to him. He reported on the following matters: SCC delivers on council tax freeze pledge by freezing its portion of the council tax for 2014/15 which was the fourth year in a row. The council will be saving £38.6million over the next year to meet a budget gap caused by on-going reductions in government grant and increased demand for services. Despite the tough financial climate, the council will be pushing ahead with important projects, such as 'Raising the Bar (driving up attainment levels in education), the roll-out of super-fast broadband across the whole of Suffolk, investing in apprenticeships, and supporting the development of 10 new, state-of-the-art care homes for older people. At the same time, the road maintenance budget – used for fixing potholes - has been protected from cuts. With plans to freeze council tax each year up to 2017, this will mean seven years with no increase. Raising the Bar in Education - a major project had been launched the previous year which was aimed at improving attainment levels and building a stronger aspirational culture around education in Suffolk. The RSA's report, 'No School is an Island', contained 20 recommendations. Among these was the idea that small rural schools with fewer than 100 pupils should enter a federation with others to maximise resources. Other suggestions included: for Suffolk to form a partnership with a London Borough with a record of improvement in educational standards, to learn from the huge progress they have made; for every school to establish a Parents' Council to ensure voices are heard, and also for all Suffolk schools to join together to form a new county-wide, school-led Suffolk Partnership for Excellence in Learning. In December's publication of the national league tables for schools, based on the most recent GCSE results, Suffolk saw a move up to 137<sup>th</sup> out of 151 local authority areas which was a five place improvement on the previous year and meant that Suffolk was climbing nearer to the national average. Local councils and businesses had signed the Greater Ipswich City Deal with the Government which would bring in £millions of new investment for the local economy. It would see thousands of people supported into works and millions invested in Ipswich and the surrounding area. He mentioned that at a cabinet meeting in December SCC had given the go-ahead to the investment of £1.5million to establish a local Apprenticeship Service for Suffolk. It was also noted that in June, the government confirmed that funding will be available to upgrade the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon. The work to upgrade the A14 will go ahead at a cost estimated at being close to £1.5billion. It was originally proposed that this would be funded in part by local authority contributions, together with tolling of the road when completed. However, following a concerted campaign by Suffolk businesses, residents, media, councillors and MPs, the plans for tolling were dropped. The improvements planned for the A14 are much-needed, and will be a shot in the arm to the Suffolk economy, particularly with regard to the ports and the through-put of freight. SCC's cabinet agreed to commit around £1million to the project over a 25-year period. It was also confirmed that Suffolk was being given an extra £5million from the government to help make high-speed fibre broadband available to the hardest-to-reach communities. The news comes as Suffolk's Better Broadband programme passes the 27,000 property mark.

5. MR. BRYN HURREN - DISTRICT COUNCILLOR - Mr. Hurren was invited to submit his report in which he mentioned that the budget for the year had been set and was a nil increase with savings required in the region of £0.5million for the year due to central government cuts in funding. Again the future of Rural Councils was going to be very difficult and would need to be based on growth. To promote this the districts would be allowed to keep a greater percentage of the business rates for new businesses; the Community Infrastructure Levy and New Homes Bonus. He confirmed that the Council was landlord for 7200 homes and this year had seen the need to increase rents to help fund the building of new Council Houses. BDC were also planning on putting solar panels on around 1/3 of its Council homes. New regulations had seen the need to improve the timescales taken to determine planning applications and it was hoped that quality would match quantity. The BDC Core Strategy had been adopted in 2014 and it was hoped that this would allow more growth within the key villages as defined under CS11. There were already a number of pre-application enquires being submitted which would result in approximately 500 new dwellings being built. The Localism Act had seen some parishes taking the opportunity to shape their own environment by Community Led Planning such as Neighbourhood Plans. There were currently 2 parishes undertaking such a plan. He drew the meeting's attention to the International Women's Cycle Ride on 11th May which was due to travel through Boxford and the European Elections on 22nd May. He concluded by thanking the Clerk and Councillors for assistance and welcome over the past year and confirmed that he had been a District Councillor for 16 years 12 of which had been for Lindsey. He was pleased to have been able to assist with the finances for the Village Sign and had been involved in the planning application for The Wrens.
6. BABERGH WEST SNT - Unfortunately no written report had been submitted from the force although the meeting's attention was drawn to recent communication from the Suffolk Constabulary Community Watch Liaison Officer for the Babergh District. It was noted that Scheme 121 Lindsey 1 (North) did not currently have a coordinator and the rules which governed Neighbourhood Watch Schemes meant that any scheme without a coordinator must be discontinued. It was agreed to ask for a two month grace period in which the Parish Councillors would canvass the village for a volunteer to run the scheme.
7. REPORTS FROM THE COMMUNITY:
- i) Village Hall Management Committee - on behalf of the Committee, Mr Clive Arthey reported that 2013-14 had started with the resignation of both the Secretary and Treasurer. Thanks were offered to the parishioners who had carried out these roles and it was confirmed that new volunteers had come forth to fill these roles. The hall continued to be used for pilates, yoga, quilting, table tennis and fortnightly jazz sessions. During the year the committee has also hosted the village celebration and had held its annual fund-raising quiz.
- Income from hall hire of £3467 was slightly higher than the previous year but it was still a struggle to cover the maintenance and running costs for the year. Once again, the Committee was grateful to the Parish Council for its grant contribution towards the overheads.
- ii) St Peter's Church Council - a written report had been submitted on behalf of the Treasurer of St Peter's Lindsey PCC, Mr M Moore. It was mentioned that for during the year May 2013 - May 2014, six services each one well attended had been held in St Peter's Church. The drains to the South East corner of the Church were re-dug and the South West wall was dried and re-plastered. A children's play area had been placed in the same area. The PCC paid £2,500 towards the annual quota. It was also mentioned that the electric lighting had been cleaned, painted and modernised. On 16 April the Annual PCC meeting had been held and thanks were recorded from the PCC to the PC for financial assistance with graveyard grass cutting. The meeting had been attended by the Rural Dean of Hadleigh and suggestions as to the future of St Peters had been made which were now being considered.
- iii) Parish Council - on behalf of the Parish Council, Mr David Waldron, the Chairman, reported that the Council had held 6 regular bi-monthly meetings during the year as well as two extra meetings to consider planning applications coming forth.
- In June an event was held at the Village Hall to celebrate the new Village Sign having been repainted. This was attended by County and District Councillors and a trustee from Hadleigh Thrift Shop which had supported the project with funds. The Parish Council supported the event by covering the expenses of a jazz band and a magician at the lunch party where villagers had brought food to share. The fine weather encouraged a good representation from villagers at the unveiling of the renovated sign.
- In October the editor of the Village Newsletter left the village and to date there has been no satisfactory replacement found among villagers to maintain a regular monthly newsletter.
- Throughout the year there has been ongoing discussions in meetings about the condition of the road surfaces and drainage of water away from roads. There had been two on site meetings with the County

Highways Officers during the year. It seems likely that this will continue to be an issue in the forthcoming year too.

The Council are very grateful for the continued support that they have had from both County and District Councillors who have attended our meetings and kept us informed of matters affecting the county and district and the difficulties currently being experienced in budgeting. We have also has regular reports from our Safer Neighbourhood Police Officers.

Finally on behalf of all parish councillor we thank our Parish Clerk and RFO for the continued conscientious work and technical advice she has given throughout the year.

iv) Friends of St Peter's Church - The Friends of St Peter's was established in 2000 to support and assist in the upkeep of the fabric of the historic village church. Over the past 13 years the Friends have funded the renovation and resiting of the organ, the provision of a new churchyard fence and a number of smaller repairs to the Church. during 2013 the Friends contributed to the maintenance of the Churchyard, funded the repairs to the south west wall and renovated the floor in the corner of the church after funding the relocation of the down pipe drain which had caused considerable damp to that area of the church.

There is a small Committee of the Friends who plan and hold a number of fund raising activities every year. This was the time of year when every household in Lindsey was approached and asked for an annual subscription to the Friends. It costs £10 per household per year and with the signing of the gift aid form extra funds could be raised from the government for this vital work.

v) Kersey Village School - a written report had been submitted from the Head-Teacher of Kersey School in which she stated that the school continued to offered a first class education for its children which was reaffirmed when Kersey School became the top performing school in Suffolk and one of the top 40 schools nationwide for attainment at KS2 in 2013.

The traditional involvement with Hadleigh Show had been maintained and the school had retained the Best School Trophy as they had won the local Small Schools Six Aside Football Tournament. To stretch the more able pupils the school had participated in numerous Gifted and Talented Events organised by its pyramid of schools and Kersey had had a more able maths day aimed at higher level mathematics in years 3 and 4. was available at this point in time. The school roll continued to grow with 78 pupils and an expectation to be over 80 pupils in September 2014. Due to the appointment of the current Headteacher to another Headship, the governors has decided against federating with other schools and sharing a head-teacher and would be seeking to appoint a substantive Head-Teacher. In the interim Mrs Sarah Terndrup had taken over the leadership of the school for the Summer Term as Acting Head. The school continues to work with the community, the Eco team has arranged litter picks in the village and surrounding area and has been delighted with the interest and involvement of parents and relatives in the shared lessons in literacy and numeracy and in the world book day events. The ministers continue to play an active part in the life of the school and lead worship at least three times every term in addition to meeting with Staff to prepare for the Eucharist or simply offer another ear for advice, encouragement and support. The educational outcomes for the children have been helped enormously by the support it receives from the whole community and further to this the financial support it receives from the Friends of the School who answer all their requests for assistance whatever this might be in order to provide additionally for every child.

8. PUBLIC FORUM: there were no members of the public present.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm by thanking all for their attendance.