

LINDSEY PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting for Lindsey was held on 20th May 2015 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall. It was agreed that Councillor Arthey would take the Chair for the meeting. He continued by welcoming the following Parish Councillors: Mr. R. Corcoran; Mrs. R. Howe; Mrs. F. Moore; Mr. A. Sturgeon and Mr. D. Waldron, as well as Mrs V Waples (Clerk) County Councillor James Finch and District Councillor Bryn Hurren (latterly).

1. There were no apologies for absence.
2. The minutes of the previous meeting of 7th May 2014 were approved by all present and signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council as a true and accurate record.
3. Ongoing matters: there were no particular issues that needed reporting.

The following 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 outlined the 12 months of achievements at Suffolk County Council during 2014-2015 and made mention of the following:
 - Change of leadership at SCC : Change of leadership at SCC - Colin Noble was now Leader of the Council and there was a new cabinet as of 20th May 2015. County Councillor Finch was now the Member of Cabinet for Highways and Transport and Estates and Farms.
 - SCC freezes council tax for fifth year in a row: SCC's share of council tax is to be frozen for a fifth year in a row. This means that Suffolk residents will not pay any more than they did in 2010/11. The council has successfully delivered savings in excess of £130m over the last four years. However, with the government's deficit reduction programme set to continue until at least 2018/19, there is a forecast of a further £120m budget shortfall that will need to be addressed over the next three years.
 - Suffolk schools' ascent of league tables confirmed: Figures out last month confirmed the trend of improvement in Suffolk's relative position in educational attainment. In data released by the government in January, Suffolk has climbed 12 places in the national league table for GCSE results since the previous year; from 137th to 125th out of 151 local authorities.
 - Suffolk first in the country to extend Better Broadband BDUK programme: Plans to extend the roll-out of super-fast broadband to more households and business were signed in October. Along with other commercial and existing programmes, the contract aims to extend the coverage of fibre broadband to 95% of homes and businesses in Suffolk. The £15m capital grant from BDUK will be locally matched by £5m from the New Anglia LEP's Local Growth Fund and £10m from SCC. As the service becomes increasingly available, people should use the 'Better Broadband for Suffolk' website (www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com) to check to see if their home or business can receive faster broadband services.
 - Multi-million-pound investment in skills secured: Businesses and local councils are joining forces with the government to invest more than £18 million in equipping people with the skills local businesses need. The money includes at least £4.5million to be invested in skills and training by local businesses in Suffolk and Norfolk and will fund employer-designed projects that will aim to halve youth unemployment in the Greater Ipswich area over the next two years.
 - UK's first Youth Employment Centre opens in Suffolk: The MyGo centre will offer all 16-24 year olds in Ipswich and the surrounding area free training, career and employment support. The project is funded through the Greater Ipswich City Deal - the government's flagship programme to devolve power to local authorities and businesses to put them in control of economic opportunities and challenges.
 - Drive to create 5,000 new apprenticeships to address skills shortage: A £1.5million campaign aimed at doubling the number of apprenticeships in Suffolk and creating thousands of new jobs and training opportunities for young people was launched during the year.
 - Suffolk's waste creates energy in Blakenham on time: £8million a year is the expected amount to be saved for Suffolk's tax payers by diverting Suffolk's waste from Landfill to this plant. The plant was opened on time and on budget last December 2014. The Energy from Waste Plant (EFW) is designed to handle up to 269,000 tonnes of waste each year. This is now working to capacity with SCC committed to sending 196,000 tonnes for treatment.
 - Suffolk County Council pledge to tackle Mental Health: In February this year, Suffolk County Council have signed the Time to Change Organizational Pledge. "The Time to Change organizational pledge, signed on World Mental Health Day, is a public statement of aspiration that as an organization, Suffolk

County Council with the NHS in Suffolk will tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. The council has submitted an action plan to Time to Change which demonstrates how this pledge will be carried out. This is a significant step forward for Suffolk County Council, as we aspire to eradicate discrimination and the stigma of mental ill-health.

5. MR. BRYN HURREN - DISTRICT COUNCILLOR - Mr. Hurren was invited to submit his report in which he commented on the following items:

- Election- he was pleased to have bucked the trend and have been returned as the elected member for the Ward.
- Budget - nil increase in Babergh's portion of the Council Tax. Need to note that once again the central government grant was being cut - Babergh's finances were currently funded 50% from central government and 50% from local sources such as Council Tax; Grants and relevant charges for services. However local government settlements were reducing all the time and this required creative thinking on the part of local councils in finding ways and means to ensure that monies were found to keep essential services running.
- Partnership working with Mid Suffolk - in an effort to reduce costs for both Councils, agreement had been forthcoming to work with MSDC to save money - particular departments that would share backroom staff were the planning department and housing department.
- Recycling - there was a drive to increase recycling rates - for every 1% of waste that was diverted from the black bin to the blue bin there was a £1/4 million of savings being achieved.
- Business Rates - the Council was now allowed to keep more of the business rates collected from new and expanding businesses and use them locally
- New Homes Bonus - for every new dwelling that was built there was a bonus for the council of £250 with £350 for a local needs house.
- Tourism - the Council was committed to promoting the area for tourism as this was a good earner for all dependent on the trade for business including the Council itself.
- Mobile Reception - the council was hopeful of securing government funding to boost the mobile reception in the worst 'hot spots' in the area. A 20 metre mast would be erected at Edwardstone which would be available to all providers.
- Housing - the provision of new homes and the lack of housing stock was the biggest challenge facing the District

6. BABERGH WEST SNT - Unfortunately no written report had been submitted from the force.

7. REPORTS FROM THE COMMUNITY:

i) Village Hall Management Committee - on behalf of the Committee, Mr Clive Arthey reported that during 2014-2015 the hall has continued to be hired for a wide range of uses. We also hosted the annual village celebration event and held our fund-raising quiz. The most noticeable change was the start of work to remove the overgrown leylandii roadside hedge. Initially it has been reduced to stumps, which will be removed when the roots have died, reducing the risk of disturbance to the car parking area. Our income from hall hire has not increased significantly and we still struggle to cover our maintenance and running costs for the year. Once again, we are grateful to the Parish Council for its grant contribution towards our 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 in 2014 the diocese of st Edmundsbury and Ipswich started a major reorganisation. This is in the main due to decreasing church attendance which in turn leads to financial difficulties and therefore an insufficient number of stipendiary priests to support the existing benefice structure. It will take some years for this reform to work through and for the results to become fully known. In the case of St Peter's Lindsey this process is to be welcomed. With the unanimous agreement of the Parochial Church Councils of Hadleigh and Lindsey it has been agreed that Lindsey will leave the Bildeston benefice and that the two parishes of Lindsey and Hadleigh will be amalgamated into one parochial church council but with two churches. In legal terms St Peter's will become a 'Chapel of Ease' but in practice there will be little change although St Peter's will benefit from the support of the much larger Hadleigh congregation leading to the church being used more rather than less. Church services will continue much as they now are.

The role of the Friends of St Peter's will however become even more essential in that it is probable that the Friends will become financially responsible for all routine maintenance of the church fabric and churchyard. For the record, membership of the PCC in the past year remained unchanged and six church services were held.

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. There was also a further meeting held between regular meetings during the year to consider a planning application to erect a new dwelling in the village. The council also discussed a further four planning application within the year during the normal bi-monthly meetings. During June 2014, the council supported the village summer celebration with a grant of funds of £100 towards the costs and the entertainment. The council has spent a considerable amount of time and effort throughout the year on issues concerning the standard of roads within the parish. Information on potholes, flooding, hedgerows, verges and lack of road signs has been passed to the county highways departments. There are still matters outstanding with the highways that remain to be resolved which will be pursued in the next year. We would like to thank our County and District Councillors for their regular attendance at our meetings and for keeping us up to date on their council business. We would also like to put on record the long service given to the parish council by Philip Stroud who was for a number of years its Chairman. He has not stood for re-election this time. Finally, we would like to put on record our thanks to the Parish Clerk who has kept us up to date with the ever changing regulations and protocols of running a parish council.

iv) Friends of St Peter's Church - There have been 5 meetings since the last report to the Parish in 2014. The following fund raising and community activities have taken place: barn dance at the Red Rose in September as a joint event with Kersey; Harvest supper in October on the eve of Harvest Festival; Christmas Flower arranging event in December. Activities for 2015 started with the Annual Soup and Cheese lunch during Lent at Folly Farm and a one woman show 'Pull Up Your Socks Britain' held at the White Rose House earlier that month. During the previous year the Friends of St Peter's had paid for minor repairs to the church roof as necessary and contributed 50% of the cost of maintenance of the churchyard. The Friends account is at present healthy but needs to be conserved to meet any repairs to the church. Annual membership of the Friends runs from 1 July to 30 June and during the current year just under 50% of Lindsey households paid the annual subscription of £10. A big thank you was offered to the Committee and everyone else who has helped to make this such a successful year.

v) Kersey Village School - a written report had been submitted from the Head-Teacher of Kersey School in which she stated that they prided themselves on being a small, friendly school where individual needs are met and all involved in the school are listened to and respected. On a daily basis this ethos is seen through a calm learning atmosphere that gives all children the opportunities to succeed. The children were fundamental to the school and throughout the year the school continues to meet regularly, the children facilitate and clerk the meeting, with the help of a Governor and teacher, very effectively taking into account the views of the rest of the school. The school council will be reorganised this term to become a learning council concentrating on the children's learning mindset, which is a focus for our development. The school roll is 81 which is the biggest the school has been since anyone connected with the school can remember. The pupils have had several educational visits that term including a trip to Framlingham Castle; a memorable performance at Snape Maltings and a whole school visit to Pipers Vale Gymnastics Centre. There are several other visits planned for the summer term. All classes participated in a local area litter pick, supporting the community and their own eco-status. The Friends of Kersey continue to support the school purchasing educational equipment and providing transport to and from events. They organised a very enjoyable and successful Easter Egg Hunt on the last day of the Spring Term. The school continues to have a committed team of individual staff and other stakeholders working hard to do the very best for all pupils, so that we can all work together and learn to achieve our potential.

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

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.00pm by thanking all for their attendance.