

# PARISH OF WATERBEACH

Minutes<sup>1</sup> of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish of Waterbeach held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2013 at 7.30 pm at the Community Primary School, High Street, Waterbeach

## PRESENT

Councillor N Kay, Chair and approximately 100 residents of Waterbeach.

## MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2012 were put to the meeting. Following some remarks from a member of the public about their accuracy, the Chair did not put their approval to the meeting and so the minutes were NOT APPROVED as a correct record.

## PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Councillor Kay thanked those who had sent out a leaflet to publicise the meeting. She then introduced additional speakers who she proposed should address the meeting on the subjects of the Science Park Station and the Local Development Framework.

At this point a member of the public raised a point of order and proposed that these items be taken after all items relating to the Parish Council had been considered. Upon the proposal of Brian Williams, seconded by Richard Young, the meeting AGREED that the additional speakers be heard at the end of the meeting.

Upon a question concerning the level of precept, the Chairman explained the error by South Cambridgeshire District Council who had issued bills for an amount £12.53 too high for Band D Council tax payers. Refunds would be issued by the District Council.

The Chairman went on to outline the achievements of the Council during the previous 12 months.

She noted that a number of people had commented on the excellent work of our Grounds Staff so that our green spaces were looking better than ever. This was supported by a round of applause from the meeting.

She noted that the Council is receiving significant money from S106 grants related to new developments. These could only be spent for specific purposes and were being used to improve the outdoor recreation facilities among other matters. In particular some funds had been used for refurbishment of the New Pavilion and the upgrade of some machinery for maintenance of the open spaces.

It had been decided some time ago to seek accommodation for a Parish Office. Most of the larger Councils in the area already have them and, as reported at the Annual Parish Meeting in 2012, the Council had agreed that the Old Pavilion would be converted to that purpose. This had now been completed.

Other matters mentioned in the report included

- Cycle racks to be installed on the area outside One-Stop
- The intention to encourage residents to provide benches with dedications, although the style would have to be consistent

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<sup>1</sup> Note that, since the Clerk who attended the meeting resigned before the minutes were written up, these minutes have been produced from her handwritten notes which only became available at the beginning of June, 2014

- The need to update the Skatepark
- The excellent work done by volunteers with winter gritting

She concluded by thanking all Parish Councillors for their dedicated work.

#### REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Councillor Williamson presented the unaudited accounts of the Council for the year April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2013.

He made a number of points as part of his presentation and in response to questions from those present

- Costs of maintaining the Recreation Ground had reduced from the previous year, largely due to the reduction in the use of contractors
- Office rent, which had previously been paid for the container on the property of Mr and Mrs Smart was no longer paid
- The total cost of the refurbishment of the Old Pavilion to produce a Parish Office was £35,533, funded by a reserve set up some time ago and a loan over ten years at a fixed rate of interest of 1.79%
- One half of the cost of the new tractor had been paid from S106 funds
- The cost of the 'Waterbeach Game' had not cost the Parish Council one penny, despite statements to the contrary
- He explained that staff costs related to the four employees of the Council; Councillors received no remuneration
- The accounts were not presented as audited because the timetable of the statutory audit made it impossible. Despite the suggestion of one member of the public, there was no requirement to present accounts for approval to the Annual Parish Meeting
- One parishioner had submitted a written question relating to the waiving of Financial Regulations when the new tractor had been purchased. It was explained that the Council could agree to this if it felt that a better deal could be obtained by negotiating with a single supplier.
- On a question asking why the tractor needed replacement, Councillor Bull explained that the old one was continually breaking down.
- On a question asking why Tillage Hall had not included a Parish Office, it was explained that the Council had decided not to include this because it might have complicated planning permission. It was also noted that the Old Pavilion had been offered to the Waterbeach Toddler Playgroup but they had decided that it was unsuitable.
- A question was asked concerning the sustainability of Tillage Hall, especially in view of the rumoured reduction in Youth Club hours. In response it was explained that the hall was becoming fully sustainable and that there was on prospect of Youth Club hours being reduced
- On a question concerning S137 grants, it was explained that these covered grants for which the Council had no specific statutory powers such as the Library and Youth Club. The Council was in the process of designing a scheme whereby local groups could apply for grants under this heading.
- On a question asking where Parish Council funds were deposited, it was explained that the Council had resolved not to hold more than £50,000 with any institution. All funds were deposited with reputable British banks

## RECREATION GROUND

Councillor Bull gave a report. She explained that now the Old Pavilion was used as a Parish Office, the New Pavilion was solely used for sporting purposes. It needed thorough refurbishment and so some S106 funds were being used for that purpose.

Because the Play Area equipment had deteriorated, it had been necessary to replace much of it. Following a tender process, Wicksteed had carried out the work.

Councillor Bull asked for volunteers who are skateboarding enthusiasts, including younger people, to contact the Clerk and volunteer to help design improvements.

At this point three youngsters gave a presentation on their work to encourage improvements to the facility. Matthew, Alex and Kieran had carried out a survey and have received 150 responses. They asked if the Parish Council could improve the skatepark and volunteered to help raise funds. They asked if any new skatepark could be moved away from the vicinity of the houses and asked if S106 funds could be used. Councillor Bull thanked them for their presentation and promised to keep in touch with them.

Councillor Bull reported that the Council will shortly be undertaking remedial work to the football pitches. Prior to this, Waterbeach Colts football club drew to our attention a new project to facilitate the undertaking of remedial work to grass pitches. This is called Sport England Cambridgeshire Facility Equipment Bank Project. A site visit was arranged at which the senior groundsman and a representative of the Colts were also present. An assessment of the recreation ground football pitches was undertaken and a course of action for the improvement of the ground submitted. This includes aeration with a vertidrain, decompaction with shockwave, sand topdressing, overseeding with a suitable ryegrass mix and an application of fertilizer. It is interesting to note that this assessment agrees very closely with that of the senior groundsman in his reports submitted to various councilors and former councilors and with a report commissioned for the parish council in December 2003. Since these reports no remedial or improvement work has been carried out on the pitches. Once we have received quotes for the grass seed, we will be able to set a date. It will take approximately 2 weeks after which the pitches would need to be rested for 4 weeks to allow the new grass to establish.

Councillor Bull thanked the Grounds Staff for their hard work during the year.

## COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Councillor Leeke reported on a number of issues. He explained that the Council was intending to go back to a committee system.

He commented on the appalling state of the roads and said that he hoped that Winfold Road, by far the worst in the village, would be attended to soon

## DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Councillor Hockney reported on some issues including the new 50 mph speed limit on the A10, the 'Slap up' junction.

He noted the proposals to develop the Barracks site and expressed his concern that the MoD housing was not yet occupied.

He paid tribute to his colleague, Peter Johnson and to the retiring County Councillor, Michael Williamson.

## CHARITIES

Mrs. Pam Gooding explained the United and Turbary Charities and gave a report on their grant giving over the previous year.

She noted that a house in Chittering was being sold and the proceeds would be shared by the Turbary Charity and by the Waterbeach Charity; this would increase the income of the charities.

#### LIBRARY

Mrs. Crane gave a report on library activities (copy on file).

#### AMEY CESP

A report on the activities on the site (formerly Donarbon) was given by Sarah Clover.

In particular she gave a progress report on the repair of the MB treatment facility.

#### DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

A presentation on this was given by Keith Miles of South Cambridgeshire District Council, supported by Councillor Pippa Corney, the portfolio holder for planning.

He emphasised that there should not be any development at Waterbeach for fifteen years.

He explained the process for getting the plan finalised.

A number of concerns were expressed from the floor including the state of the A10, provision of infrastructure.

#### CAMBRIDGE SCIENCE PARK STATION

Chris Poultney of Cambridgeshire County Council gave an update on this new station due to be completed by 2015.

A number of points were made from the floor which the speaker promised to take back to the County Council.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A question was asked about the delay on putting minutes on the website. It was explained that this was done by a volunteer but that more work would be done to speed up the process.

A comment was made that two Newsletters a year was inadequate

The Chairman closed the meeting at 23:00