

## **HINXWORTH PARISH COUNCIL**

**The Annual Parish Meeting:-** This was due to take Thursday April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020 at 8.00pm in the Village Hall but was cancelled due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The documents/minutes/accounts that would have, under normal circumstances, been agreed at that meeting, have been agreed by the Parish Councillors. These are attached.

**MINUTES OF HINXWORTH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON**

**THURSDAY 4th APRIL 2019 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 8PM**

**Present:** Mr R. Cobb (Chairman)  
Mr R. Lewis (Vice Chairman)  
Mr D. Osmond  
Mr E. Sore  
Mr N. Tiffin  
Mrs W. Kitchener (Clerk)

**Other Persons Present:** District Councillor Janine Paterson  
17 Members of the public.

**Apologies:** County Councillor Steve Jarvis

**1. The Election of Hinxworth Parish Council:** The Chairman Richard Cobb thanked those attending and welcomed everyone to the Meeting. He reminded everyone that due to the forthcoming elections on May 2<sup>nd</sup> the election of the Chair and Vice Chair cannot take place until after that date.

**2. The Minutes of the last Meeting:** The minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday April 5th 2018 were circulated. Vivienne Hughes proposed and Patrick Forbes seconded that the minutes were an accurate account and they were accepted unanimously.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes:** No Matters arising.

**4. Chairman's Report:** The Chairman Richard Cobb gave his report for the benefit of the attendees. See copy attached includes for further details as per the items below.

**5. Matters Arising from the Chairman's Report:** No Matters arising. One question raised will be dealt with under Planning Item 9.

**6. County Councillor Steve Jarvis's Report:** See attached report.

**7. The District Councillor Janine Paterson's Report:**

• **Update on the Local Plan.**

The consultation period for the Local Plan was extended and the report to be voted on should be with the full Council by the autumn.

The last Council meeting approved the budget for 2019/2020. The agreed the Council Tax to be increased by a marginally higher sum than in the past few years.

Janine notified the meeting she is standing down as District Councillor at the May 2<sup>nd</sup> election.

• **Questions from the floor:**

**What work to A1 has it been include in the Local Plan Consultation?** The A1 is not implicated in the Plan as it is the remit of Highways England. The only known plans which is for the A1 (M) further south at the Stevenage/ Welwyn section.

The Chairman noted his concern also, as did those attending the meeting that the volume of traffic on the A1 locally has increased and Hinxworth is used as a short cut for vehicles including heavy duty vehicles. Therefore was it possible for a weight limit to be imposed for the local area as these heavy duty vehicles are causing damage to the roads. This will be brought to the attention of the County Councillor.

**Access from New Inn Road to the A1:** This is now becoming dangerous due to the addition traffic on the A1. Is there any likelihood for this junction to be updated in line with the Dunton/Edworth turn? The Chairman thought this would be unlikely as the Dunton/ Edworth turn was part of the Langford Bridge development.

The Chairman then thanked Janine for her report and wished her well for the future.

**8. The Adoption of the Accounts:** The Clerk as Financial Officer responsible gave a brief outline of the audited accounts for the year ended March 2018. Again there had been no increase to the precept. The largest expenditure was on the repairs to the War Memorial. The proposal to adopt the accounts was made by Alec Stephenson and seconded by Patrick Forbes.

- **Questions from the floor:**

**The Precept:** Responding to the request from the floor as to why the precept from 2017 onwards had not been revised downwards to take in account the repayment of the Public Works Loan Board sum of £43K paid off in 2016 the Chairman reminded those attending that the precept has remained at £10370 since 2007. It had not been increased during that thirteen year period to take account for inflation. Due diligence and careful financial prudence had allowed for this.

Therefore the precept remains again at £10370 for 2019 to allow for funds to be in hand for the upkeep of various amenities in the Village, the War Memorial, the Village Hall, the Recreation Ground, the Tennis Court, the Children's Play area in the future.

**9. Planning:** The Chairman reported there were no contentious planning issues.

- **Questions from the floor:**

**The Parcel of Land at Chapel Street/ Arnolds Lane:** The Chairman notified the meeting this matter will be dealt with by either Hertfordshire Highways and North Hertfordshire District Council if necessary.

**10. Highways:** Please see the Chairman's report.

- **Questions from the floor:**

**Cantlebury:** The question of what part of the land they are responsible for has yet to be ascertained by Hertfordshire Highways.

**Lighting in the High Street:** A concern was raised that there is only one street light in the High Street and in some areas it can be dangerous to walk along the pavement.

**11. The Village Hall:** The Chairman again thanked the Village Hall Management Committee for their continuing work.

**12. The Recreation Ground:** A padlocked gate has now been installed between the Car Park and the Recreation Ground. The keys for entry will be held by the Chairman and the Clerk. Additionally David Granger Grounds Maintenance will have a key.

**The Tennis Court:** Plans are in place to make to use the court for multiple activities. Thomas Mills gave a presentation to the Parish Council at the March Meeting. The Councillors are now investigating the possibilities.

**13. Allotments:** To date there are six vacant plots.

**14. Any other Business:**

**Dog Excrement in Arnolds Lane:** It has been noted this is a problem not only in Arnold's Lane but on the Recreation Ground and other areas in the Village. It appears dogs are walked in the Village from other areas locally, where dogs are banned from being walked in certain areas, therefore this matter has become a problem. Most dog walkers use the "bins" to deposit the "doggy pooh bags". No doubt anyone seeing the offenders will have a necessary word with them.

**Barry Huber:** On behalf of those present at the meeting Barry Huber conveyed his thanks to the Parish Council for their continuing endeavours on behalf of the Village.

**The Chairman then brought proceedings to a close. He thanked everyone for attending. The meeting then closed at 9.15 p.m.**

Welcome to the Hinxworth PC AGM

Thank you all for making the effort to attend.

Steve Jarvis our County Councillor sends his apologies he has two AGMs to attend tonight. Welcome to Janine Paterson our District Councillor.

As you will be aware this is the last meeting of this Parish Council, we have come to the end of our 4 year term.

So there can be no election of Chair & Vice Chair until the May election are completed.

**My Report.**

I am pleased to look back at the last 12 months as fairly peaceful.

So I can be brief.

As promised, we have installed a Smiley face speed sign out at the South end of the High Street this was funded by the Highways and ourselves on a 50/50 basis. £2,500 being our share have a 5 year Guarantee with the Highways looking after it,

There has been a noticeable improvement from speeding traffic coming from the Ashwell end approach, it is our hope that we can get a similar agreement for another sign at the North end as the current sign although still working its well passed its operational life.

Pot Holes take up a lot of time! With the help of Steve Jarvis, we have had a good job of quality repairs to New Inn Road.

We have been promised the High Street will have a similar works done in the New F/year with the whole road being top dressed the following 12 months.

Gully/Drain cleaning has improved this year as well.

## **The Village Hall**

I would like to thank the current and passed members of the Village Hall Management Committee for the great efforts they have put in the last 12 months.

We have a new kitchen which is fantastic and was made possible by their hard work, fund raising.

And physically fitting the kitchen themselves with their husbands!

Also the generous donation of a Local Resident, the fund raising, and the Parish Council input we now have a facility we can be very proud of.

*For me this is what living in a small community is all about*

Going forward The Hall Committee will have to generate more cash to balance the books over the new f/year, I have every faith they will do that. Now that this large spend is out of the way.

## **Recreation Ground.**

I am pleased to say the Archery Club have signed the annual agreement for 2019/2020 starting in April.

And the Caravan Club have booked again for this year and also already for 2020. This is a good revenue income for us.

We have been approached by some youngsters from the village headed up by Tom Mills who gave us a small presentation to the PC last month. Which was well received.

This was regarding the Tennis courts and its long-term future. The court was installed over 30 years ago and times have changed.

The surface is showing signs of wear and tear caused by the weather rather than people playing. The Tennis Club folded several years ago.

The idea is to look at the feasibility of having a more usable area for Walking football, Net Ball etc, we have visited Ashwell school to look

## **Hinxworth Parish Meeting – 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

### **County Councillor's Report**

Firstly, I must apologise for not being able to be present at the parish meeting this evening. Since I represent 16 parishes there are often conflicts between parish meetings and that is the case this evening. If possible, I try to find a way to attend both meetings when this happens but this evening the timing and the location of the meetings means that is just not possible.

The biggest call on the County Council's budget of around £800 million continues to be provision of social care to very elderly and seriously disabled people across Hertfordshire. This consumes around half of the total budget with another £200 million spent on services for vulnerable children and those with very special educational needs. These services are largely invisible to most residents (unless they know somebody in need of them) but are vital to those who receive them.

The inevitable result of this is that the money available for other services such as highways which are visible to all of us is more limited than we would like.

After much pressure the County Council has agreed to provide additional money to repair some of the more minor roads which otherwise never got to the top of the list for repairs. In addition, this winter the government provided some "one off" money to repair more roads on the condition that the work was done before the end of March. This is not an ideal arrangement since many works need to be planned months ahead and there are some jobs which can only really be done in good weather.

The result of these two changes is the repair of New Inn Road and the planned repair of the High Street and Frances Road, which is to be done during the current financial year. Assuming that the works are done well (which is usually but not always the case) this should put most of Hinxworth's roads in good order for a few years. There will still be a need to improve the state of parts of the road between Hinxworth and Ashwell, but I hope we can make some progress on this before too long.

I'm pleased to hear the speed indicator device, which was paid for partly from my highways budget and partly by the Parish Council, appears to be having some effect on traffic speeds. Generally, these devices seem to make most drivers slow down, although a small minority are immune to these and most other ways of reducing speeds.

The County Council is reviewing its speed management strategy and in particular its policies relating to 20 mph limits. I hope that this will make it easier to introduce such limits in more villages where this is appropriate.

Like all other County Councillors, I have a budget that is available for grants to local organisations. I try to ensure that this is used for new initiatives rather than running costs, but the only rules are that the grant must be for an organisation with a bank account and only those who ask get any grants. I am always very pleased to hear from local organisations with plans that would be assisted by a grant of a few hundred pounds.

I am also always happy to try to deal with any local issues which people raise. I can be contacted by email at [steve.jarvis@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:steve.jarvis@hertfordshire.gov.uk), via my website at [www.stevejarvis.org.uk](http://www.stevejarvis.org.uk) or by phoning 01438 727122.