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MINUTES of the Annual Town Meeting held on Tuesday 19th April 2016

Chair, Mr Peter Eldridge

Vice-Chair, Mrs Pat Dore

Clerk, Mrs Alison Doe

The Chair opened the meeting, thanking all for attending, 27 members of the public attended the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from District Councillor Yvonne Bendle, PCSO Marie Albinagorta, Reverend Colin Reed, Hingham Charity (Ruth Bateman) , Hingham Playgroup (Rebecca Mitchell), Lincoln Social Centre (Anthea Iveson) , Hingham Youth Café (Zoe Jones) and Good Neighbour Scheme (Louise Reed)

2. **The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting** of Tuesday 21st April 2015 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

3. **Matters Arising**

None

4. **Chairman's report**

Mr Eldridge stated that his report had been published in the parish magazine and on the website. And asked if there were any questions regarding its content.

Mr Eldridge thanked the Town Councillors and the Clerk for their work and support during the last year. Thanks was also offered to the County and District Councillors for their support of the town.

5. **End of Year Accounts**

The accounts were presented as draft accounts, complete as far as available bank statements would allow. The Clerk confirmed that the cash book and bank reconciliation tallied up. The draft accounts were accepted.

6. **Guest Speaker – Mr Ben Handford – Naked Marketing**

Mr Handford explained that while growing up in Norfolk he didn't know where Hingham was, but since setting up Naked Marketing in the town, he has found it to be a fantastic town with a real sense of community, but saw many people and organisations doing lots of good things for the town but all in isolated bubbles. Mr

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Handford explained that with a more centralised way of communicating information (such as centralised shared notice boards in prominent positions) that the information available would be less diluted and reach a wider audience (benefitting both residents and visitors to the town). Ben noted that there are currently 18 noticeboards, many holding out of date information, and that while the Town Council website held up to date Council information, the events calendar was empty, and championed the idea of town website or greater use of social media for promoting the clubs/organisations and their events. He suggested that the greens would be an excellent advertising place on the day of an event to entice people driving through.

Mr Handford applauded the idea of a Christmas Market and added that lots of lights in the trees over Christmas to help to make the Town look special. He also praised the Parish Magazine, but said as a business, he did not receive it, and therefore not being resident in the town, was not aware of many of the events that take place. He encouraged more inclusion for the businesses, as they could be a key source of support (possibly both financial and in time and expertise) for the Clubs and Societies needing assistance, suggesting the organisation of a fun event/ challenge, where the businesses could be invited to have a team and take part – with a social event (BBQ) afterward.

A pack for the residents of the new houses was suggested to let them know what organisation/events are available in Hingham, to encourage them to be involved and spend their free time in the town, helping the town to grow and thrive.

The Chairman thanked Mr Handford and invited questions or comments.

From the Audience:

It was stated that the notice boards outside of the town centre were regularly looked at by walkers, probably more so than the ones in the centre of town – one of which is dedicated to the Hingham Society

When the website was set up the Town Council voted against societies being able to access the calendar to promote their events, however a Facebook page has now been set up and will be available for events to be advertised on. It was noted that Facebook is not for everyone – but suggested that a seminar could be put on for those who want to use it but don't know how.

There was some debate as to whether the businesses receive the Parish Magazine, it was explained that any new businesses were approached, but not all wanted to advertise in it and that it was thought that only 4 businesses don't receive it, but it is available in Harrods. It was requested that a copy of the Parish Magazine be given to the businesses in the town.

7. Hingham Surgery – Dr Shaun Conway

Dr Conway said that the work to extend the surgery was now complete, and that 2 new doctors were in post (both part time). The surgery has been hosting medical students since 2014, and would now be taking a short break from this, with more students at a later date. Dr Conway explained that there had been a rise in patient numbers due to Watton Surgery shedding patients, with current patient figures at 5766, and was aware that it was not always possible for patients to see their preferred doctor, but hoped that as patients get use to the new doctors the situation would resolve itself.

Dr Conway outlined the future challenges for the surgery as, reducing time patients wait for their appointment once at the surgery, and the increase in patient numbers that would be brought about by the new houses, but added that this was estimated to take patient numbers to approximately 6000, which the surgery should be able to absorb.

The Chairman thanked Dr Conway, congratulated him on the Surgery being rated 8th best surgery in the country and invited questions or comments.

From the Audience:

It was commented that time spent listening to patients was very much appreciated and it was accepted that this may increase the time waiting in the surgery for appointments.

8. Reports from Organisations within Hingham

The following reports were received from Clubs/Societies and Organisations – copies of all of the reports were given to everyone attending the meeting (and are appended to these minutes) - additional comments made regarding each report are noted below.

8.1. Hingham Town Council – Working Parties

Events Working Party – Thanks was given to Cllr Yvonne Bendle and to South Norfolk Council for their support and for the grants awarded toward the cost of the Mediaeval Fair and the Queen’s Birthday Celebrations. A request was made for volunteers to help with the arrangements for the Queen’s Birthday Party, and it was noted that as part of the celebrations there would be a BBQ, Face-painting and a Bouncy Castle at the Sports and Social Club on Sunday afternoon 12th June, and that the Market in the Market Place was planned for 9th July.

Highways Working Party – Thanks was given to the volunteers in helping to achieve a commitment from Norfolk County Council to implement some road safety improvements within the town. The next project for the working party is to re instate the community Speed-watch for which a volunteer co-ordinator is needed.

Cemetery Working Party – Thanks was given to Mr Ramm – for all of his hard work maintaining the cemetery, and for the Volunteers on the working party for their ongoing hard work to improve the cemetery making it a pleasant and peaceful place for visitors. The next project is to undertake a planting scheme at the entrance to the cemetery to further enhance its appearance.

It was questioned if the Churchyard Working Party was still in existence – and if the work to remove the Yew tree was going to be undertaken – The Clerk advised that a contractor had been appointed to trim the Yew trees but none were scheduled to be removed – the issue of the Churchyard Working Party will be referred back to the Town Council.

8.2. Hingham Charity

It was noted that the request for the allotment plot size to be reduced had been taken on board.

8.3. Hingham Education Trust

A reminder was given that the application forms are available from early August and must be returned by 16th September. Details are published in the Hingham parish magazine and other local parish magazines.

8.4. Hingham Good Neighbour Scheme

8.5. Hingham and District Community Car Scheme

Thanks was given to the Hingham Good Neighbour Scheme and the Surgery for reminding people that the Community Car Scheme is available, for the hard work of Nancy Playford for administering the scheme and for all of the volunteer drivers – although 2 more volunteers had come forward many more are needed to preserve the longevity of the scheme. Concerns were raised regarding

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the budget cuts at South Norfolk Council and that this may have an impact on the funding provided for the scheme.

8.6. Hingham History Centre

The report contains a typing error and should read that the average turnout for the Mardles is 40.

8.7. The Hingham Society

Concerns regarding the drainage strategy for the Hops development were reiterated, and the Hingham Society will be keeping a close eye the effect that the development has on the flooding problems already highlighted. It was noted that the Litter Pick will be held on 24th April at 2pm, meeting outside the White Hart.

8.8. Lincoln Social Centre

8.9. Hingham Youth Café

8.10. Hingham Playgroup

8.11. St Andrew's Hingham Heritage Fund

It was noted that the performance by The Academy of St Thomas on 17th September is a joint venture with the History Centre, and that light lunch with music will take place in the church on the 3rd Wednesday in the month (until September) with a curry lunch on 7th May.

8.12. St Andrew's Ringers (STARS)

STARS reported that they continued to thrive having a 2 octave full set of bells, playing at care homes, the Mediaeval Fair and will be playing on the Sunday of the Queen's Birthday Celebrations.

8.13. Methodist Church – Bond Street

8.14. Hingham Gardening Club

The trip to Desert World was described as an excellent evening, and it was noted that the trip to Hyde Hall in Essex is on July 20th. New members would be very welcome as the club is getting low on numbers.

8.15. Hingham Rectory Bowls Club

The Bowls Club reported that membership had gone down due to injuries, and that there were problems with the fabric of the building, and difficulty in securing grants to help, it was suggested that some advice may be available from the Tennis Club who had been successful in securing grants in the past. The Bowls Club building is available for hire during the summer months and open "roll up and play" sessions are available.

8.16. Hingham Tennis Club

It was reported that the Tennis Club had received comments that they were underselling themselves by charging £60 per adult membership, but understand that not everyone will want to commit to a membership so are planning to have a Pay and Play scheme, where courts can be booked and paid for over the phone/online – But a balance would have to be struck between making the facility accessible to all and keeping it secure to ensure it is looked after and preserved at a standard that will ensure continued payment for memberships. Thanks was given to the HPFA for their support, to South Norfolk Council for financial and planning assistance, to Kate for leaflet delivery, to Hingham Town Council and to all the businesses and individuals that donated £5.00.

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It was asked if the provision of Pay and Play would be written into the constitution, it was confirmed that it would.

Congratulations were given to the Tennis Club for their achievements.

8.17. Hingham Cricket Club

The report contained a typing error and should read – Watton Road Playing Field.

8.18. Hingham Playing Field Association (HPFA)

The content of the report was outlined, in particular stressing the maintenance issues due to the age of the building and the problems with lorries parking in the car park, the use of cameras to try and prevent this is being investigated. Thanks was given to the clubs that use the playing field and building for keeping in touch with the HPFA. Additional volunteers to the committee would be most welcome.

9. Reports from District and County Councillors

District Councillor Yvonne Bendle and **County Councillor Margaret Dewsbury** submitted written reports, copies of which were given to all attending the meeting (and are appended to these minutes). Thanks were given to Cllr Bendle, for her support and for the grants given to help Hingham Town Council run events in the town.

Cllr Dewsbury added that she is always willing to help so please ask f her assistance is needed. Thanks was given to Cllr Dewsbury for her support.

10. Any Other Business

It was suggested that a meeting regarding the referendum could be arranged with guest speakers, but as the idea had not generated much interest, it would not be pursued.

Mr Eldridge thanked everyone for attending closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

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Chairman