

MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF TUESDAY 18th APRIL 2017

Chairman - Cllr Peter Eldridge

Clerk - Mrs Alison Doe

26 members of the public attended the meeting

(Copies of all reports submitted were available at the meeting and have been published on the Hingham Town Council website).

1. **Welcome, and to Receive Apologies for Absence**

The Chairman opened the meeting, thanking everyone for attending. Apologies for absence were received from Dr. Shaun Conway, PCSO Danny Hodge, Police and Crime Commissioner Lorne Green, Vickie Newrick – Head Teacher Hingham Primary School, Sue Van Raat, Gaby Maltby, Alison Lys, Kate Chan, Anthea Iveson.

2. **To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 19th April 2016**

The minutes were agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman

3. **Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 19th April 2016**

None

4. **Address by Hingham Town Council Chairman including:**

4.1 **Chairman's Annual Report**

In addition to written report the Chairman thanked everyone for their hard work during the year.

4.2 **Chairman's Award for Services to the Community**

The Chairman explained that the award was an initiative to promote and celebrate the good work that goes on within the community. He had decided this year the award should recognize the work of the Hingham and District Community Car Scheme, and offered thanks to all the volunteers. Certificates were presented to Nancy and Dennis Playford who, after many years' service, had decided to retire from their roles (as coordinator and driver) within the Community Car Scheme.

4. **To Receive the Hingham Town Council – Draft 2016/17 Year End Accounts Summary**

(A copy of the draft Account Summary was available as part of the papers for the meeting). The Clerk explained that there would be a small amount of interest to add when the final bank statement was received. While costs were increasing the Council tries to save money where possible, for example the grass cutting costs had been reduced through tendering for a new contractor. The miscellaneous spending was less in 2016/17 due to substantial grants being awarded in 2015/16 to aid with repairs to the Lincoln Hall and to the Tennis Club. 2016/17 had seen an increase in the cost of tree work which was required for safety reasons. Overall spending was less in 2016/17 than in the previous financial year.

The Chairman added that the Council may have to look at fundraising for specific projects, such as repairs to the town clock.

6. **Guest Speakers**

6.1 **Mary Sykes talk about the Garden Organic Master Composter Project**

Mary was welcomed to the meeting.

She explained how she had become a Master Composter volunteer after seeing the information in the parish magazine, and had then attended the course. Her role as a

Master Composter is to promote the Master Composter Scheme and encourage others to compost garden and kitchen waste at home, by giving talks and presentations, visiting people to offer advice on composting. The Master Composter Scheme is a partnership between Norfolk County Council who fund the scheme and Garden Organics, (a national charity concerned with research and education into environmentally friendly and sustainable gardening) who provide the training. It is hoped that the scheme can reduce the amount of biodegradable waste being sent to landfill with general refuse (it is estimated that 20% of waste is biodegradable), and in turn reduce the cost to councils. By households dealing with their own biodegradable waste they are creating a sustainable compost product, which reduces the need for peat compost and reduces CO₂, by reducing the mechanical need for transporting and dealing with biodegradable waste. It is hoped that a “community compost scheme” could be set up sometime in the future within Hingham.

Mary was thanked for her talk and attendance at the meeting.

6.2 Norfolk Constabulary Representatives - David Law, Traffic Management Officer and Inspector John Colbert

David Law and Inspector John Colbert were welcomed to the meeting.

Inspector Colbert introduced himself to the meeting, advising that he had been in place in his current role since December 2016. He outlined how Norfolk Constabulary had been collaborating with Suffolk Constabulary to share back office functions to get in line with the 2020 funding cuts, reducing back office costs to allow more officers to be put on the front line, (with a recent recruitment drive).

Locally the Police consist of response officers who respond to 999 calls and other emergencies and the crime workload, the beat manager PC Gary Owen, PCSO Danny Hodge and a small proactive team who work in the community where there is a crime spike in a specific area. 15 areas have regular “street surgeries”. Hingham has very isolated areas of crime, mainly being anti-social behavior and criminal damage. PCSO numbers for this part of the district have reduced from 19 to 6.

The following concerns were raised with Inspector Colbert:

- Historically, there was a frequent PCSO presence in Hingham and the PSCO would attend Town Council meetings, now PSCO is not seen in the town. Inspector Colbert advised that Hingham is a low crime area and resources have to be deployed where there is most need, and because of reduced numbers the PSCOs would not be able to attend all Parish and Town Council meetings, therefore the street surgeries initiative was set up, and this could be looked at for Hingham if a suitable place was available.
- It was suggested that if figures of crimes solved were reported it would encourage people to report crime, the concern was raised that Hingham is perceived as a low crime area as not all crimes go reported. Inspector Colbert advised that the reporting of crime has increased and some information of crimes reported is available on the crime map on the police website.

David Law Traffic Management Officer introduced himself to the meeting, advising that he had been in his role for 20 years and now he covered the whole of Norfolk. The main part of his role being to investigate accident hot spots where there are injury collisions, conduct data surveys and make recommendations to Norfolk County Council. Throughout Norfolk, one of parishes’ main concerns are regarding speed. He explained that a 20mph speed limit was implemented through a change of signage whereas a 20mph zone was implemented through additional traffic calming measures. Government guidelines suggest that the average speed through a 20mph area should

be no more than 24mph. The interpretation of the guidelines had led to 20mph speed limits being introduced where there the environment would mean that the 24mph top speed was not being adhered to. The speed survey within the Market Place showed compliance with the 20mph speed limit was 55%. Mr Law advised that he had made representation to Norfolk County Council who had advised that there is no funding available for traffic calming measures other than through the Parish Partnership Scheme, he also advised that he had raised concerns with NCC regarding the extension of the 20mph speed limit without addition engineered traffic calming measures being introduced.

The following concerns were raised with Mr Law:

- It was raised that the 20mph speed limit is clearly signed and that there is no excuse for drivers ignoring the speed limit. It was also raised that the safety camera van is regularly placed in Scoulton meanwhile it is not placed in Hingham where there have been several accidents at the Fairland crossroads and that there appeared to be no enforcement of the speed limits in Hingham. Mr Law advised that the safety camera van is a joint venture between County and the Constabulary, they will operate where injury collisions are occurring and also where compliance levels are below 80%, they do not operate with in 20mph Limits or Zones, since these areas should be self-enforcing he also advised that PSCO Danny Hodge had recently visited Hingham with the compliance boards.
- It was noted that the Highways Working Party, consisting of both Councillors and Volunteers had worked hard with NCC and the Police to come up with a package of measure to be implemented to try to reduce speeding, and that these measures were designed to work together and at present the extension of the 20mph limit which is part of that package of measures is still awaited. It was requested that some enforcement be carried out in the short term. Mr Law explained that it was evident that the white lines to the edge of the road had not worked as a speed reduction measure (whereas in other parishes this had worked), Inspector Colbert acknowledged that the request for enforcement would be taken on board.
- It was also requested the issue of allowing the Community Speed Watch to be undertaken within the 20mph limit also be raised with the Safety Camera Partnership board, as speeding within the 20mph limit is of such concern to the community, it was pointed out that Community Speed Watch is undertaken with a 20mph limit in other counties. Mr Law explained that the volume of letters needing to be sent to non-compliant drivers would be too great to be achievable by the resources available to the police.

The Chairman thanked Mr Law and Inspector Colbert for their attendance at the meeting and summed up by saying that an occasional police presence in the town would be most welcome and that if residents had concerns over the enforcement of the 20mph speed limit to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner Lorne Green.

7. To Receive a Report from Hingham Surgery

Nobody from the surgery was able to attend the meeting.

8. To Receive Reports from Hingham Clubs, Societies, Charities and Organizations (approximately 5mins each)

Written reports from the following Clubs, Societies, Charities and Organizations were circulated and a verbal overview was given by the Chairman (the reports are appended to these minutes) any additional verbal updates given at the meeting are recorded as below:

8.1 Hingham Town Council – Working Parties

Highways and Speed Watch – It was added that the Highways Working Party has now been dissolved in favour of using more flexible Projects Working Parties as required. The Council have been successful in their bid for Parish Partnership Funding and hope to install a footpath along the road edge of the Market Place south green, which would allow potential for a site for a pavement to pavement crossing place. Comments on the proposed footway are invited.

Events Working Party – The Market in the Market place is planned for 10th June, Hingham Clubs, Societies, Charities and Organizations are invited to have a stall to raise funds for their causes.

Cemetery and Churchyard Working Party- work continues to improve these areas of the town.

Thanks were offered to the volunteers.

- 8.2 **Hingham and District Community Car Scheme** – The scheme is always looking for volunteers and currently needs a new administrator and volunteer drivers.
- 8.3 **Lincoln Social Centre**- Bookings are steady but there is usually availability at weekends.
- 8.4 **Hingham Good Neighbour Scheme**
- 8.5 **Hingham Luncheon Club** – Seems to be enjoyed by everyone who attends.
- 8.6 **Hingham Bereavement Support Group**
- 8.7 **Hingham Education Trust**- the Charity can only assist with further education and welcome application from those eligible (limits regarding family income apply) and encourages those eligible to apply (applications made between early August and mid September).
- 8.8 **Hingham Charity**- There are several allotments available on the Mill Farm Allotment site.
- 8.9 **Hingham History Centre**- Are in desperate need of a storage facility for all of the important historical documents. To raise funds, a quiz will be held in May and a garden party will be held in June volunteers to help at events would be most welcome.
- 8.10 **The Hingham Society** – It is hoped that a conservation group can be set up in conjunction with Norfolk Wildlife Trust.
- 8.11 **Hingham Gardening Club** – Membership to the club has been in decline and new members are always welcome, the group meet on 2nd Tuesday of the month, guest speakers attend the meetings and light refreshments are served.
- 8.12 **Hingham and Hardingham Art Group** – New members are always welcome.
- 8.13 **Hingham Methodist Church – Bond Street** – Thanked Hingham residents for their support, the monthly market and coffee shop is well supported – a bi-monthly raffle is held to raise funds. The Methodist Church will host the town garage sale again this year, have a stall at the June Market and a Summer Serenade event on that afternoon (10th June) and another sing along in September.
- 8.14 **St Andrew’s Hingham Heritage Fund** – Raises funds solely for the upkeep of the building (St Andrews Church) being such an important landmark for the town, to keep the building in good repair is a monumental task, new members would be welcome.
- 8.15 **St Andrew’s Ringers (STARS)**
- 8.16 **Hingham Rectory Bowls Club**- The existing club building is old and is in need of attention, the fence regularly gets driven into. The club is lucky to have volunteers who attend to the green as this can be costly. It is difficult to get

youngsters involved and would like to have some younger members within the club. Everyone is welcome to have a taster session.

- 8.17 Hingham Bowmen Archery Club-** Are a friendly group, with the club going back to before the First World War! They offer taster sessions and introductory lessons – and encourage new members as it is great fun.
- 8.18 Hingham Cricket Club –** The club is doing well and would like to welcome new members, anyone can go and watch the games.
- 8.19 Hingham Short Mat Bowls Club –** The club is resident at the Watton Road Sports Centre and are doing well, visiting team come from all over the country to compete.
- 8.20 Hingham Athletic Football Club-** Would like to encourage more youngsters and to set up a youth team and a female team too. Volunteers to help with the club would be most welcome.
- 8.21 Hingham Tennis Club –** The club has achieved so much in 1 year since being set up and now has 213 members and have won Club of the Year in Norfolk. There are 3 tennis coaches and offer a range sessions. Court access is available for non-members via booked pay to play or free “Open Court Days”. The club is working with the youth café to offer coaching and Working with Wymondham Tennis Club. The HPFA and Sports and Social Club were thanked for their support. New committee members would be welcome.
- 8.22 Hingham Playing Field Association (HPFA)-** Funds are needed to provide maintenance to the large sports centre building and the Welcomme Playspace. There is always something that need fixing! The Clubs that use the facility are very supportive and money is raised through the Sports and Social Club, although grants can be sought for new projects it is difficult to get funding for ongoing maintenance. A new community involvement project is being looked at to provide support for the longevity of the facility. New committee members and volunteer help would be most welcome and any one would be welcome to attend the Annual General Meetings.

9. To receive Annual Reports from County and District Councilors

Written reports from Cllrs Yvonne Bendle and Margaret Dewsbury were circulated (the reports are appended to these minutes) any additional verbal updates given at the meeting are recorded as below:

9.1 County Councilor Margaret Dewsbury

Norfolk County Council have increased to precept help to cover the rising cost of adult social care and other services, but continue to look for ways of delivering services more efficiently, including working with other partnership agencies on the Early Help Hub initiative.

There will be another round of Parish Partnership funding available this year through NCC Highways. Libraries continue to offer a diverse range of initiatives and the Library and Information Service have won a national Libraries Change Lives award.

9.2 District Councilor Yvonne Bendle

South Norfolk Council are looking to build homes on land that they own in Long Stratton and Poringland. The Council considers it its duty to help vulnerable people and have been able to maintain funds for the welfare grant and are working with 27 partnership members to deliver the Early Help Hub initiative. They have worked to ensure that the majority of the affordable housing on the Hops development have been occupied by local people. As a result of the new development, outdoor gym equipment will soon be installed at the Watton Road Sports Centre.

Changes to the refuse collection time table have helped the service run more efficiently with less disruption caused by bank holidays. Residents can contact Councilor Bendle who will do her best for Hingham.

10. To Discuss Any Other Business

It was queried as to the progress on the potential for a mobile phone mast in Hingham. Peter Trett advised that the discussions were on going for an internal mast to be placed within the church tower.

The question was raised as to when the co-op would be opening in Hingham, it was advised that the store should be opening in August.

Cllr Yvonne Bendle was advised that Hingham was not mentioned in the press coverage of the South Norfolk Council business awards. Cllr Bendle advised that the awards were now District wide and not part of the Market Town Initiative which had now been wound down. Anyone wishing to nominate a business for South Norfolk Independent Retailer Awards can get further information on the categories for nomination on the South Norfolk Council website.

The meeting ended at 9.10pm

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and invited them to stay for refreshments.