

LAMPOR AND HANGING HOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Thursday 26 May 2017

All Saints Church, Lamport, Northamptonshire at 7.00 pm.

1. ATTENDANCE

Councillors: Bob Cox
Jonathan Farr
Colin Harris (Chairman)
Mike Philpott
Bruce Ward
Richard Flavell While

Parishioners: There were 12 parishioners in attendance
and Andy Crisp Chairman of the Neighbourhood
Watch Support Team for Daventry

Apologies were received from Kathy Dunmore, Cllr Richard Fairfield, Percy and Jackie May, Mary and Tim Parker, Paul and Ellie Phillips, Jill Philpott, Trevor and Margaret Thomas.

2. MINUTES of the previous Annual Parish Meeting 19 May 2016
The Minutes having been circulated were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Financial Report and Accounts
Audited Financial Report and Accounts for the year to 31st March 2017 were made available. The Parish Council closed the financial year to 31 March 2017 with a balance of £4,529.92 against an opening balance of £4,627.28.

4 Chairman's Report
The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 83rd Lamport and Hanging Houghton Annual Parish Meeting 2017.

A year of surprises. Did we expect the Brexit result, the rapid rise of the share index or the rapid drop in the value of sterling? The world held its breath as a new president gained control of the oval office, a new prime minister for the UK and at last, the installation of fibre optic broadband in the Parish but the news that 'trumped' it all was the announcement that Lamport and Hanging Houghton's Parish Council Chairman had decided to retire. Cllr Harris gave a huge vote of thanks to Richard Fairfield for his unstinting duty during his seven-year tenure. His steady hand on the tiller has steered the Parish Council through the many transactions, obligations and external affairs that form the business of Council meetings.

On behalf of Richard, he passed on thanks to our Parish Clerk, Frances Allbury for keeping us on the straight and narrow and looking after us all so well and to the Vice Chairman, Mike Philpot for his wisdom and fund of knowledge that enlightens our deliberations and thanks to the whole team of office bearing Councillors for their support, commitment and excellence in the execution of their respective duties throughout the year.

As the new Chairman and relative newcomer to the Parish, he felt fortunate indeed to have the support of the unchanged resident team of the expert Clerk and Councillors who were as always there to ensure that due diligence is maintained and proffer advice throughout the coming year.

The Parish Council dealt with no less than seven planning applications and to meet the deadline of an application to the DDC an extraordinary meeting was called at short notice to sanction an eighth.

Among the varied items on the agenda have been parking difficulties, white-lining at the junction of Manor Gardens in Hanging Houghton, potholes in Lamport's roads, pavements in poor state of repair and a vegetation covered pavement in Hanging Houghton, all of which have been reported to DDC, some of which have been actioned.

Application was made for the closure of the byway between Hanging Houghton and Cottesbrooke during the winter months to stem the flow of undesirable through traffic. Although this had been achieved on previous occasions, the Rights of Way Officer advised that this was a bridleway, not a byway and therefore not subject to closure. Council is currently making further investigations into the matter.

Tree management of the row of limes in the approach to Hanging Houghton had been undertaken and one tree completely removed due to safety concerns. Barrier trees surrounding the sewage plant in the valley below Hanging Houghton had collapsed partly due to storm damage but the responsibility for replacement remains an ongoing issue.

Since the County Council had been relieved of the grass cutting and the task awarded to a local contractor, there had been considerable improvement in the quality of the cutting. The same contractor also alleviated the problem of what appeared to be the beginnings of a new reservoir that regularly flooded the verge of Manor Road, by sinking a drainage system that flowed away from the road.

Concerns regarding litter had been raised over the actual ground litter and the suitability of the fixed litter bins. The council agreed that picking up ground litter should fall within the auspices of all parishioners as there was not sufficient volume to instigate an official 'litter pick'. The request to DDC to replace the small litter bins with a larger size has yet to be concluded.

For the future: the Parish Council is looking to build a new website where more comprehensive documentation and information can be posted for the reference and benefit of all Parishioners. We will advise completion through the Parish Magazine.

The telephone box in Hanging Houghton, soon to be disconnected, has been granted a Grade II listing and plans are in hand to hopefully convert to a Defibrillator Station under the control and guidance of Mr Bob Cox who is trained in the use of defibrillators.

Cllr Harris was delighted to announce that Mr Tony Boullemier had agreed to take up the office of the Neighbourhood Watch Warden, so a big thank you to Tony for helping to allay our fears of the ever-present risk of petty and sometimes not so petty criminal activity. We should all be vigilant and report any dubious presence to Tony but not of course as an alternative to a situation that necessitates a 999 call.

His report concluded by expressing the hope that any surprises that may come our way during the next twelve months will all be good ones and that our Parish will enjoy a year of peace and harmony.

5. Social Events Report

Cllr Philpott and Chairman of the Social Events Committee said that two main events had been organised during the year, the ever-popular annual village Barbecue and carols on the Green which has also become an annual highlight.

Cllr Philpott gave a big vote of thanks to Tom for once again allowing use of the barn and power supply for the BBQ, without which it would be extremely difficult to hold such a weather dependent event. Thanks also to all who supplied barbecues, music and general help which all contributed to another splendid occasion enjoyed by a record breaking crowd.

The 2017 BBQ will be held on Sunday 27 August 20178 and flyers will be arriving through villagers' letterboxes with all the details during June. This event is always well attended and everyone will be encouraged to promptly save the date for this year.

Carols on the Green in Hanging Houghton on Christmas Eve made a joyous start to the seasonal festivities. The annually-increasing gathering, with between fifty and sixty carollers were kept in tune by a friend of Nigel and Sue Coles, organist Andy Bransby. The singers, both adults and children in good heart and voices were encouraged by the accompanying organ, singing with great gusto and melody.

Thanks go to the organisers who even managed to organise the clement weather and thanks to everyone who provided some seasonal food and drinks.

6. Parking in Manor Road, Hanging Houghton

The Chairman read out an email received from Percy May regarding the continued problems with parking in Hanging Houghton. He said that despite the best intentions of the Parish Council over many years there appears to be nothing that they can suggest to alleviate the difficulties caused by more vehicles than space available. The Parish Council has no jurisdiction or power to make any alteration to the highway.

Cllr Cox said that he had eventually received assurances that the white lines at the top of the village will be repainted during the two weeks commencing 19th June 2017.

7. Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Cllr Harris introduced Andy Crisp, Chairman of the Daventry Neighbourhood Watch Support Team. Mr. Crisp said that he was delighted to attend the meeting to relaunch the scheme in Lamport and Hanging Houghton under the control of Mr. Tony Boullemier the newly appointed local co-ordinator. He was confident that Tony would be able to recruit a team of parishioners in both villages to work with him. Key to assisting police with apprehending criminals was information, intelligence and evidence. Generally crime in the area had been at a low level, but there had been an upward spike recently. Any suspicious activity should be reported to the police by dialling 101. Parishioners will be encouraged to sign up to the Neighbourhood Watch website.

Mr. Boullemier said that he would be looking forward to receiving support from both villages and would be carrying out a leaflet drop shortly in order to sign up a team to assist in keeping the scheme high profile. The Chairman thanked Andy and Tony on behalf of the Parish Council and parishioners.

8. Northamptonshire Police Report: Sam Dobbs, Daventry District Command Report circulated.

9. District Councillor Report: Fabienne Fraser-Allen, Brixworth Ward Report circulated.

10. Open Question time

10.1 A parishioner asked if there was a way to keep everyone informed of anything of general interest in the villages. Cllr Flavell-While said that the best way would be via a face book page and he would investigate and report back to the Parish Council.

10.2 A parishioner asked if the Parish Council had made any progress with the barrier of trees which had previously obscured the view of the sewage works in Hanging Houghton. As mentioned in the Chairman's report, unfortunately the trees were gifted by Anglian Water and although planted on Lamport Hall land, they are not responsible for upkeep.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Signed:

Date: