

LAMPART AND HANGING HOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Wednesday 26 May 2021
at Lampart Hall, Northamptonshire at 7pm

1. Attendance and apologies

Councillors:
Bob Cox
Dale Gasson
Colin Harris (Chairman)
Percy May
Cathy Dugmore
Richard Flavell While

In attendance: Peter Dugmore, Neighbourhood Watch/Police Liaison Representative and 4 parishioners

Apologies were received from Cllr Jonathan Farr

2. Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting 21 May 2020

The Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Financial Report and Accounts

Audited Financial Report and Accounts for the year to 31st March 2021 are available to view on the Parish Council website. The Parish Council closed the financial year with a balance of £3,294.23 against an opening balance of £4,540.64 brought forward from the previous financial year. Included in the true balance is £443.80 which is the remaining sum held in respect of defibrillator funding (lottery grant and local fundraising). Bob Cox commented that the defibrillator had not been used during the last 12 months.

The reduction in cash at bank was due to the cost of more village grass cuts up from 6 to 13, and the purchase of a parish council laptop for the use of the clerk. The village grasscutters had indicated that one cut per month was not sufficient to keep the villages in a clean and tidy condition. Each cut costs £160 plus vat

4 Chairman's Report

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 87th Annual Parish Meeting. Last year a virtual meeting in the district of Daventry, this year reality in the district of West Northamptonshire. We certainly are living in uncertain times but with the required precautionary measures in place it is a pleasure to once again be holding our meetings in the presence of actual people.

As the Parish Council approached the year end, they reluctantly accepted the resignation of two long-standing councillors, Mike Philpott and Bruce Ward, both gentlemen having served over twenty years on the Parish Council for which they deserve sincere thanks. In their place the Chairman welcomed Cathy Dugmore and Dale Gasson who would bring enthusiasm and new perspectives to the table, once again augmenting the council to full strength.

The Chairman thanked the council for its unfailing attention to Parish issues throughout a difficult Covid affected year, and Jonathan Farr for his unwavering support as vice-chairman and not least of all, a big round of applause for our hard working, diligent clerk, Frances. So hard working in fact that she has worn out her own computer justifying the purchase of a new council dedicated laptop.

The Parish was truly fortunate to have continued use of the Lamport Hall facilities, so thanks went to Chief Executive, Mark Herrod who has offered a selection of venues to suit the current Covid guidelines.

An additional notice board provided by Bruce Ward had been erected near the defibrillator box with the aim of drawing attention to specific activities. 'No parking' advice notices had been purchased and positioned along Manor Road in an attempt to preserve the verges from too much damage by visiting vehicles. A new grit bin located at the entrance to Hanging Houghton is on order to replace the current one which is in a state of collapse.

To complement the website community link. Percy May and Mike Philpott had gathered email addresses from parishioners to create an email community link which to those who have signed up, notifies parishioners of important events. It is never too late if you have yet to sign on.

Earlier in year, the arrival of a mobile home and its subsequent parking in the grounds of The Grange caused considerable consternation among our residents. Described by many as an eyesore or a blot on the landscape, the removal of trees and fencing now replaced by a makeshift barricade together with its location where it looms over an adjacent property may leave something to be desired but it is there apparently, only on a temporary basis. Planning permission is not required for this type of residence.

The offer of the maintenance and grass cutting of the Churchyard by Lamport Hall was accepted, costing only slightly more than before but it does of course eliminate the necessity for constantly rounding up volunteer gardeners.

The Manor Farm now being vacant has given rise to some conjecture amongst parishioners as to the future of the farm. Cllr May has initiated discussion with Lamport Hall on possible implications and how its future may impact upon the village, especially the issue of vehicle parking at the junction of Manor Walk, Manor Gardens and Manor Road.

Planning applications amounted to five this year and all were investigated in the proper manner although, virtual meetings are far from ideal for discussions of this nature. Following the resignation of the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator at last year's AGM, Mike Philpott agreed to stand in for a twelve-month period, so thanks went to Mike for bridging the gap that has now been filled by Peter Dugmore. Peter also takes on the role of Police Liaison Representative and is currently developing both roles, reports of which will be presented at future meetings and possibly by other forms of communication as well.

Colin thanked everyone for listening and after question time hoped everyone would meet for a drink in the walled garden hosted by Lamport Hall.

5. Social Events Report

Cllr Dugmore said that due to the pandemic no social events had been held since the previous Annual Parish Meeting, but now that some restrictions had been lifted a cream tea has been organised for 1st July 2021 at the Carriage House, with proceeds going to the Lamport church fabric fund. She hoped it would be possible to arrange further functions through the year.

6. Neighbourhood Watch

Following on from his report to the Parish Council at their Annual General Meeting the previous week, Peter said that he would be providing a link between the Police, the Parish Council and the parish following publication of a blueprint for neighbourhood policing across the county. His aim was to keep all parties fully informed with security related issues by email link and social media. Cllr May commented that while the majority of households in Hanging Houghton has signed up to the email community link, some work still needed to be done in Lamport. The villages would benefit from a dedicated local police beat constable who would be appointed within the next few weeks. Peter will be publishing a neighbourhood watch newsletter shortly.

8. Open Question time

Mike Phipott reported two items: firstly that a Raybell skip lorry was parked partly on the pavement outside a property in The Croft. It was agreed that Cllr Gasson would have a word with the driver regarding this parking issue. The footpath between Brixworth and Lamport was in an extremely dangerous condition and represented a hazard to walkers using it. Earlier in the year Northamptonshire Highways had intimated that they would be carrying out work on the footpath to bring it up to an acceptable standard but this has not taken place yet. The Clerk would try to expedite this work.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.30 pm and all present were invited to join Mark Herrod in the walled garden for refreshments.

Signed:

Date: