

Necton Annual Parish Meeting



Minutes of Meeting held Thursday, 23 April 7.30pm in the Necton Rural Community Centre

Note: These minutes will be formally approved at the Annual Parish Meeting in 2016.

Parish Councillors present: Frank Woodward (Chair), Denise Axham, Jeanette Webb, Joe Sisto.

Also in attendance: Gabrielle Joyce (Clerk), 25 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence

Cllrs Matthews, Cheshire and Thompson, Parish Council

Cllr Kiddle-Morris of NCC, Mr Steele of Necton Primary School & Mr Charles Carter, Parish Councillor from 7 May 2015.

2. To approve minutes

3.1 Minutes of last Annual Parish Meeting were read out by Cllr Woodward. They were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Parish Council Reports

3.1 Chairman's report from Cllr Frank Woodward:

It has been a very stressful year, having lost a clerk with the upheaval caused, but on the positive side, we now have Gabbie, who was thrown in at the deep end and has come through with flying colours.

My thanks to all councillors for their hard work and support, and especially Cllr Webb, whose help has been beyond words. Hopefully the next year will be easier than the last.

We are still short of one councillor, although we have gained Mr Steve Cheshire. I was hoping to have a full council of nine after the election.

Our thanks go to Hilary Bewes for keeping our Welcome Packs up to date and delivering 49 in the last year.

Once again, my thanks go to everyone, including members of the public who come to our meeting and support us.

3.2 Clerk's report from Gabrielle Joyce:

The Clerk delivered a short slide show highlighting some of the activities of the Council within the village during the past year.

The Clerk also gave an overview of the Parish Council's finances. The figures presented at this meeting are still subject to audit. The summary of receipts and payments can be found in the Annual Report, which will be available on the Parish Council website late summer 2015, once returned from the external auditor.

4. Reports from outside bodies

4.1 District Council, Cllr Wilkin declined to speak on this occasion given the proximity to the District Election on the 7th May.

4.2 County Council, Cllr Kiddle-Morris provided the Clerk with a report, which was read out:

The Council Tax levied by Norfolk County Council (NCC) will remain the same for 2015/2016. An extra £150m has been granted by central government for highway maintenance and repairs. This will be forwarded in roughly equal payments over the next 6 years, it has not been decided what the extra money will be spent on but I understand that stalled capital projects such as resurfacing work and junction improvements will take priority.

Over 141,000 homes are now benefitting from the NCC/BT £30m (£15m from Central Government and £15m from NCC) Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) contract to provide superfast broadband. A second, £12m contract (BBfN2), is now in place to increase the superfast broadband coverage to 90% of household across Norfolk.

Government have also granted £18m to NCC to improve infrastructure in Norfolk Schools.

The Parish Partnership Scheme which funds small scale highway improvements will be funded at 75% by NCC in the next round, only a 25% contribution will be required from the participating Parish.

Previously this was a 50/50 cost sharing arrangement.

County Farms has been put on a much firmer financial footing and the 16,000 acres of Council owned farmland now contributes £2.5 to frontline services.

The Council changed from a Leader and Cabinet system of governance to a Committee system last May. A review of how the Committee system is working and an assessment of the need for improvement was promised for November last year but has not, as yet happened. There is some discontent among Members about the way the new system is working and that the "democratic deficit" is more marked than under the old Cabinet system which the introduction of the committee system was supposed to address.

5. Reports from organisations

The following organisations provided an oral update to the meeting:

Necton Allotment Society (copy published on Parish Council website)

Necton Lunch Club (copy published on website)

Ladies Friendship group

Necton Parish Church

Little Oaks pre-school

Pandora Project

Necton Sports & Social Club

Community First Responders

A written report was provided by Mr Steele, Headmaster of Necton primary school. (copy published on website)

Cllr Woodward presented Grant 2014 payment cheques to representatives from Necton Sports & Social Club, Necton PCC, Little Oaks and Pandora Project.

6. Update from Dudgeon Offshore Windfarm project

Kari Hege Mork, Stakeholder Manager for the project provided a short presentation, outlining current progress and future activities. Ms Mork also confirmed that Dudgeon have agreed to financially support three community projects – Community First Responders (£1,800), primary school (£8,000), new bus shelter on A47 (£20,000). Further opportunities for local funding will be available through a new Community Fund to be set up in 2017 and managed by Norfolk Community Foundation.

7. General Parish Issues

- May elections – the parish election is un-contested.
- Necton Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Webb explained how this community led plan will make a positive impact on the village's future development and would encourage interested parties to

contact the Clerk for more information.

- Friends of Necton Village – Mr Treasure outlined the purpose of this new group of village volunteers who would provide practical help for specific jobs. An opportunity to get involved without too much commitment. To join, contact Jeanette Webb, Peter Treasure or the Clerk.
- Village Forum – Mr Treasure explained that this is a forum where all village organisations can share information, provide collective support and access opportunities for funding. The forum is chaired by Peter Treasure and it meets about twice a year.

No other matters were raised and the Chair thanked all who attended and brought the meeting to a close at 8.45pm.

Minutes signed by Chair (or designate) _____ on _____