

MINUTES OF A THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF HOLYWELL-CUM-NEEDINGWORTH HELD ON THURSDAY 4th JUNE 2020 AT 11AM HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM MEETING

(In accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels Coronavirus (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020)

PRESENT:

Cllr S Mortlock (Chairman)
5 Parish Councillors
2 members of the public
Miss J Bowd (Parish Clerk)

The Chairman opened the meeting with a statement advising of the change of procedure due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. She highlighted all reports have been available via the Parish Council website.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Cllr A Holloway
Cllr L Macrae
Cllr J Neish
Cllr C Pearce
Cllr M Williamson

2. Minutes of the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting

The Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting were signed as a true and correct record.

3. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman of the Parish Council's report was available online (Appendix A)
No Questions were asked.

4. To receive questions relating to reports from the following local organisations / bodies (submitted reports can be found on the Parish Council website)

- CCC (Appendix B)
- HDC (Appendix C)
- Needingworth Village Hall Trust Report. (Appendix D)
- Relief in Need Charity

No questions

5. Financial Report of the Council.

Based on year ending 31st March 2020.

Year ending 31/3/19 (to the nearest £)

Income £243,158

Expenditure £132,640

£222,099 carried forward as general and allocated reserves.

Precept £112,458 (Band D £116.06)

Copy of Annual report has been distributed to all houses and incorporates a copy of these accounts.

Internal audit Mr M Williamson- Mijan Consulting Ltd

External audit PKF Littlejohn completed on 23/9/2019
Unqualified report

Draft figures for year ending 31st March 2020.

Please note: These figures have not yet been presented to, approved by council or been subject to audit.

Income £ 132,624 (Precept & other income)

Expenditure £115,887

£238,835 carried forward as general and allocated reserves.

Internal audit will be carried out by Mr M Williamson, Mijan Consulting Ltd date to be confirmed.
External auditors appointed PKF Littlejohn LLP.

The Parish Councils Annual Report will be published by 30th September 2020.

Precept for new financial year 2020/21. £116,565

This equates to a band D property paying £118.34 per annum an increase of **£1.61** per annum (0.30p/week)

RELIEF IN NEED TRUST REPORT.

Year ending 31/3/20

Opening balance	£836.59
Interest	<u>£ 6.69</u>
Withdrawals	£ 0.00
Balance 31/3/19	£843.28

No applications have been received or grants approved in this financial year.

Trustees:

Colin Pearce	Margaret Perryman
Rev Sheila Anthony	Sarah Mortlock
E MacPherson	Ben Peilow
Jane Bowd (administrator)	

6. Public Open Forum.

The Chairman asked the members of the public if they wish to speak and received no reply. Comments were made regarding the virtual meetings. They expressed hope that we would soon be able to return to face-to-face meetings.

Cllr R Fountain advised this may be a possibility from July at the Village Hall.

The Chairman expressed that it would not be possible to predict how many members of the public may attend.

The Clerk has today received guidance from NALC which may cover this situation.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their hard work over the past year.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.07am

Chairman

Date

APPENDIX A

Parish Council Chairman's report 2020

At the start of the year we could not have foreseen how it would end and the circumstances which I find myself writing this are unprecedented. The impact of the covid19 pandemic continues to reverberate around the Parish but it has brought out the best in everyone including the PC Staff who have continued to work throughout the crisis supporting the community effort, adapting to new legislation whilst maintaining standards of work. Thanks must go to Jane Bowd, Alison Jackson, Ian Armstrong, Ricky Storr, and Lorraine Pearce who are all working hard towards resumption of "normal" whilst abiding by government advice. Please monitor PC website and Facebook for all the latest guidelines.

Planning continues to take up considerable time with 37 applications having been considered in the past year some more contentious than others. Rest assured PC do value resident comments and continue to work for the benefit of the community when deliberating.

CIL projects are ongoing but I am pleased that the extension to the footpath Millfields to the cemetery has finally been completed bar minor landscaping, this will benefit many and improve road safety.

Decision taken to develop a 5year plan to regenerate the Overcote lane playing field and for the existing under11's play equipment to be painted.

Rural exemption site finally got underway and it is pleasing to finally see houses rising from the ground. Please remember, to register your interest if you meet criteria for these Homes.

Environment ever important. Allotment plots Still popular and there is a waiting list for plots. The PC continue to support the forest school project. Council have supported the community environmental group by providing a location for growing if wildflowers and our hedgehog box initiative proved popular.

Work comes at a cost and it was necessary to place a small inflationary increase on the precept which equates to £1.61 per annum for a Band D property.

Regular updates on PC projects are provided via the villager, Facebook and the website and all councillors and staff are available should you have any suggestions or ideas as we work towards coming out of this crisis.

APPENDIX B

CCC Report 2020

Every year seems to throw up new challenges for local authorities at all levels and this year is no exception, while dealing with the usual challenges of having to deliver additional services with even less financial resources, the latest challenge of protecting the county from the Covid crisis has stretched every sector as we have to learn a new way of working. Before I proceed further can I offer my condolences to anyone who has lost someone to this insidious, awful and frightening disease, which is new to us all. I say this because Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for Public Health, therefore we have been tirelessly working with all other agencies in ensuring food, PPE and all other associated items reach those who require them in a timely manner particularly those who are classed as vulnerable or have the 'Sheltered' status, 17,500 people county wide. This of course leaves out staff exposed to Covid despite all precautions being taken as they serve the public and to date we have 72 staff members showing symptoms and 30 diagnosed!

My own area of special responsibility is with the Fire Service, who unsurprisingly have been in the middle of the Covid Crisis working as ever quietly and effectively behind the scenes supplying personnel to assist Ambulance Crews, food delivery and house calls to those who are Sheltered / vulnerable. The saga of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) continues to rumble on, even though there has been a widely published change of PCC. You will recall we challenged the widely unpopular decision by the PCC to try and take over the Governance of the Fire Authority this is now being looked at in detail by the courts !

Possibly, the most satisfying aspect of the year was to be recognised by central government as one of the best Fire Authorities in the country, something we all knew but was confirmed after a long and detailed inspection process. We have consistently been seen as one of the lowest spending but highest performing Fire Authorities.

I attempt to give a regular update / overview on a variety of subjects in your Villager magazine. If there is any specific area you would like more detailed information please get in touch.

APPENDIX C

Report from Your Huntingdonshire District Councillor Jon Neish Ward member for Holywell-cum-Needlingworth 2019/20



I hope you are all keeping well, staying safe in the situation we all find ourselves in which none of us could have imagined just a month or so ago.



When I took over as your District Councillor 2 years ago, I had not even heard of Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Now I sit in, from the comfort of my home (as many of you are having to do) partaking in meetings with some 250 plus Councillors and Cabinet Ministers from around the country on weekly briefings. Seeing them struggle with technology is interesting and then the seamless way (well nearly) our Parish Council have conducted its virtual meeting was a revelation. HDC held its first Virtual Development Management Committee (DMC) on 18th May. This is fundamental in continuing our democratic processes with planning applications and to try and kick start the economy when allowed.

We reach the start of yet another month of significant interruption to normal operations for all of us and HDC. I am pleased to report that most of our services are fully operating.

We are still maintaining 100 per cent service on all waste streams, street cleaning and grounds maintenance. This means that HDC is one of just five per cent of all local authorities in the country that are still providing 100 per cent service provision of this nature. This compares nationally to only 20 per cent operating street cleaning normally, and 41 per cent operating a garden recycling service normally.

Economic Development, Finance and Revenue & Benefits officers have also been working flat out and completed nearly all the £10k and £25k grant payments to eligible businesses and all the applications for our new council tax deferral scheme. We are still trying to reach around 600 small firms that have yet to apply!

We are now about to move onto the second phase administering support for the new discretionary grant scheme which will be even harder. Over 2,500 households have applied to defer council tax payments until June.

The Huntingdonshire Community Hub has now been operating for nearly 2 months with about 7,000 phone calls made to vulnerable residents, 600 food parcels delivered, and 700 prescriptions. The County Council is responsible for providing help and support to those residents who have been deemed 'clinically extremely vulnerable' and placed on the shielded list. The residents that HDC has contacted so far are people we have identified through other means as being vulnerable and possibly in need of help that they would not get from CCC or the Government because they're not on the shielded list. The work that is going on from the hub is really making such a difference to the people throughout the district.

HDC have been keen not to step in, and potentially tread on anyone's shoes, where support groups have sprung up in villages like ours.

Social media, for all its faults, has proved a lifeline for many. Street volunteers have sprung up within villages who are all doing a vital role of supporting those that cannot go out.

One Leisure Tennis Courts

The tennis courts at One Leisure, California Road, St Ives have been reopened to the public on a pre booked basis only. Residents can book courts via www.oneleisure.net or the One Leisure app on a pay as you play basis or take advantage of an annual pass. Please see the attached press release for full information.

Skateparks

Our skate parks in St Neots – Riverside and St Ives – Hill Rise, remain closed to minimise the spread of the virus and keep our residents safe. Our parks and open spaces continue to be open for use, but we encourage everyone to follow social distancing guidelines.

Country Park visitors

With the recent relaxing of rules and glorious weather, Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Paxton Pits have seen a staggering increase in visitors. Whilst social distancing within the parks is practical, we are reminding residents to please be mindful of these rules, especially within the car parks. Where possible please walk to the sites or cycle.

We have seen the same issue within Holywell-cum-Needlingworth. I would remind everybody within our village to keep to the, ever-changing Government guidelines, on social distancing and report any concerns through the correct Police channels.

Testing or Swabbing for COVID-19

Testing or swabbing is an important part of the COVID-19 plans to ensure that people can return to work as quickly as it is safe to do so and take the appropriate actions if they test positively.

For all of the latest information about who is eligible to access a testing, and how to book a test at one of the national testing facilities located in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>. There are two drive through sites within the District but **please note, all tests must be booked in advance. New centres at St Neots and Huntingdon One Leisure sites.**

The next few weeks, months and years will be exceptionally challenging in so many ways for all of us.

I am currently working with the Leader and Officers, as his Deputy, on recovery plans to support Town centres to open safely.

HDC are committed to assist our residents and support businesses back to whatever normality is. We will use the opportunity to improve our ways of working but it will be financially testing. Our income has been dramatically reduced. Just one example is car parking charges, which we all like to complain about. Our losses in income is nearly as much as it costs to run our waste management in its entirety. Without these types of income streams council tax from our residents would have to be far higher than they currently are. We have also invested heavily in alternative incomes from a range of property portfolios that are still holding up well.

This is why we have agreed, at our additional costs, to take over all the County Councils grass cutting (not highway verges I may add) within our village to ensure our 'pride of place' agenda is expanded. It will not please everyone as a few prefer less cutting, but we will cut at least 6 times a year and not just the apparent three as existing.

As Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning I have responsibility for planning in Huntingdonshire. Our village has seen several applications that have not always been welcome, except for those that need houses. The number of affordable housing within the village will see an increase and the Rural

Exception site has now restarted giving a real opportunity for our own residents to finally get on the housing ladder. I will continue to challenge unsustainable and non-policy compliant applications in the knowledge that we now have a strong Local plan. This growth will undoubtedly increase the workload of the Parish Council but also brings opportunities with new residents who I know will be welcomed. They will help support our fine local school and businesses within the Village

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to all your Parish Councillors and its Officers. Your Parish Council has stood up to the Challenge and continued to work as normal as it can. The office has been fully staffed despite the cramped difficulties; the grass cut with bins emptied. Nearly all the normal Parish Council activities have continued. On top of this the additional challenges of this pandemic have created a monumental amount of behind the scenes extra work. They have still managed to meet all their commitments (some even virtually).

Stay safe and well

Warmest regards

Jon

Jon Neish

Deputy Executive Leader, Vice Chairman of the Cabinet, and Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning

District Ward Councillor for Holywell-cum-Needingworth



Needingworth Village Hall Chairman of Trustees Annual Report May 2020

During the past year three members of our committee of trustees left, two new trustees joined and we presently have a committee consisting of nine trustees.

Last August we made an application with the Charity Commission to make an amendment to our governing document which was reviewed and approved by them. That means that we can now have a committee of trustees consisting of 6 elected members and not more than 5 co-opted members all of whom are eligible to vote at committee meetings.

A second application was also made with the Charity Commission in August 2019 to have the Village Hall Trust name changed from Holywell-cum-Needingworth Village Hall Trust to Needingworth Village Hall Trust. This was also reviewed and approved by them and we did that because for many years all of our documentation, licenses, etc. refer only to Needingworth Village Hall Trust. The Village Hall name itself remains the same although for ease just about everyone refers to the hall as Needingworth Village Hall.

We have continued with the strategy to replace all failed lighting with LED tubes and all outside lighting has been completed in this respect as well as the interior bar lighting.

The Pavilion internal walls have been painted with Dulux Endurance Diamond tough Emulsion and the skirting boards painted with Acrylic Eggshell white paint. The wall panels were painstakingly cleaned of almost all marks and do not require overpainting.

A new awning will be purchased to replace the one that was alongside the Pavilion and was irreparably damaged during strong winds last summer.

A number of table tops for tables in the Pavilion were purchased and used to replace damaged ones.

PAT testing has been carried out in all areas of the Village Hall including the Parish Council Office and Chatters Electrical items. This was done by a committee member who attended a PAT training course and subsequently has the PAT testing Certificate and was done with a PAT testing kit purchased by the Village Hall Trust.

The criteria for the testing of emergency lights working has recently changed and needs to be done once per month and will be done alongside the fire alarm testing. Endurance testing is required to be done annually.

Following a Parish Council Safety Audit of the Village Hall we have added Emergency Exit signs above the emergency exits on the outside of the building. We have also put extra emergency exit direction signs along both sides of the long corridor leading away from the main foyer.

The floors of the Main Hall, Corridor, Kitchen, Disabled Toilet, Ladies and Gents toilets have been stripped down and polished by Helen our cleaner and now look really impressive.

A sub-committee consisting of Councillor Roy Fountain, Trustees Andy Killoran and Patrick Quick are working with the Parish Council on plans for an extension to the Village Hall to accommodate a permanent stage and also with the possibility of a new Parish Council Office being attached to the extension.

The committee of trustees via our Vice Chairman Roy Fountain is presently working with the Parish Council to find a way to amend/correct the 2015 Village Hall lease so that we can successfully present it to the Land Registry for registration. Unfortunately, this was overlooked by both parties when the lease was drawn up 1995 and also 2015.

The Village Hall continues to be a busy community hub used by many local community groups on a regular basis and others from the surrounding areas.

We have not had as many functions such as birthday party celebrations and the like over the last two years for one reason or another and some of that can be put partly down to competition from other local venues with them offering special deals and their location.

However, the Village Hall continues to make a financial annual surplus and we remain in a strong financial position.

From a fund raising view one event that proved to be a success once again was a Pop up Restaurant on 9th October provided by outside caterers Sandra Starling and Phil Boddy. This was our third Pop up Restaurant and this time it featured a Caribbean menu and a short quiz to test each team's knowledge on aspects of the Caribbean. The meal was excellent and we received many kind comments from our guests who thoroughly enjoyed the evening. Unfortunately, owing to the Corona Virus pandemic we had to postpone the Pop up planned for 8th April which was to have been a Greek based menu. We are hoping that the tide will have turned by August so we can put on another Pop up evening.

The Wellworth Players put on another fantastic play "Murdered to Death" which ran for three days from 24th October. Although I personally was unable to attend their follow up Christmas Pantomime owing to other commitments I am told it was brilliant.

The annual Nfest Music Festival held in July 2019 was still a success even when taking into consideration the very wet weather on the Saturday. Sunday was a much better day weather wise but overall takings were considerably down on the year before. Unfortunately the Corona Virus outbreak has meant that Nfest 2020 which would have been the 25th anniversary of the event has had to be cancelled. All being well we can celebrate the 25th anniversary of this event in June 2021. One of the highlights of the year was the annual Gardening Club show in August. Once again it did not fail to impress with some fantastic produce on display and beautiful flower arrangements to be

seen. The cakes and bakes always look so scrummy and I managed to come second in the pickles. There were only two entries but that won't deter me and I will continue to pickle my walnuts, onions and shallots.

We held a band night on 6th December with the appearance and debut of a local group known as Eclipse – The Pink Floyd Tribute and they went down extremely well with the audience many of whom were and still are Pink Floyd fans. The evening was a great success and the music was brilliant.

In the New Year we put on a second band night and this time it featured the Outlaw Eagles, a very vibrant group and again they went down extremely well with the audience and another great evening was had by all who attended.

The annual Bazaar was once again held in the hall on 7th December and was as popular as always with an amazing selection of wares for sale including mouth-watering cakes and bakes.

The annual Village Hall Quiz on 7th March was a great success and a thoroughly entertaining evening.

Unfortunately and in line with Government guidelines the Village Hall was closed to the general public on Saturday 21st March owing to the Corona Virus and it will remain so until otherwise advised by new government guidelines.

Along with many other charitable concerns this has had a financial impact on the income and running of the Village Hall. Fortunately owing to the careful financial management of the hall by the committee of trustees over the years we are in a position where we are able to absorb a certain amount of financial loss which is not the case for all Village Halls and other charitable concerns.

We have had to furlough our Village Hall cleaner as of 3rd May and pay her 80% of her wages which we will claim back from the governments furlough scheme but we the committee of trustees have agreed to top up her wages by 20% to give her the full salary for the time being.

We have approximately £600 worth of bar stock and we are hoping that we will not have to throw it away owing to it being out of date which depends on how long the lockdown will last.

We have received a rebate of £90 per month on our rates from HDC who also sent us an application form for the Retail Leisure and Hospitality Grant. This was duly completed and submitted and we have since received £10,000 into our bank account. This will help offset our losses to some extent which are currently in excess of £500 per month.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Village Hall Management Committee for all the good voluntary work that they put into making the hall run smoothly, the Parish Clerk, Assistant Clerk and the Parish Councillors for their co-operation during the year and of course all our regular users of the hall. This all helps us to provide a pleasant village centre point for the local community.

Stay well, keep safe and lets all hope that this present situation with the Corona Virus will soon be a thing of the past.

Best regards

Andy Killoran

Chairman,

Needingworth Village Hall Committee of Trustees