

# Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

## MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held at Hales Village Hall on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019

### Present:

HHPC Councillors: Sheila Beckett (SB) - Chair  
Georgina Buckle (GB)  
Phil Grimes (PG)  
Alan Mason (AM)  
Andy Woodman (AW)

Other attendees: Cllr. Kay Billig, Simon Barnes (presenter) and Members of the Public (some 20 residents)

Parish Clerk Eleanor Bannister (EB)

**The meeting was opened at 7.30pm.**

**1. Welcome** - The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Kay Billig, recently re-elected as District Councillor, South Norfolk Council.

### **2. Norfolk County Council & South Norfolk Council - Updates**

**2.1 Norfolk County Council – Cllr. Margaret Stone** – Sent a report attached as Appendix 2.

**2.1 South Norfolk - Cllr. Kay Billig** - Summarised some of the recent changes including:

- A change in ward boundaries, resulting in Loddon & Chedgrave now including Hales & Heckingham.
- However, no significant changes to South Norfolk Council following the elections.
- With the appointment of a joint MD for South Norfolk District Council and Broadlands Council (Trevor Holden – from January 2019), there are positive economies of scale. The area covers approximately 250,000 people and the partnership enables access to larger pots of funding and investments while hopefully maintaining lower council taxes.
- Investments in Norwich Enterprise Park will be made in the next twelve months.
- Significant funding is being distributed to local charities.
- There will be a budget for the Ward but given the period of purdah (around elections) this needs to wait until after the EU elections.

**3. Annual Review of Parish Activities** – The Chair presented the following review.

#### **3.1 Roundabout, Bus Shelters & Improved Bus Service**

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We have seen the completion of the road works associated with the new roundabout, although the landscaping is yet to be finished. Councillors Stone and Billig of Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk Council generously supported the provision of the new bus shelters. Unfortunately, the southbound shelter has been damaged, and a replacement has been ordered. Our bus service has improved so that the X2, X21 and X22 serve the village. There are now 5 buses between 7 and 8 each weekday morning, 4 between 5 and 6 in the evenings and a vastly improved schedule generally.

## 3.2 Playing Field

The installation of the new equipment was completed in June and many families in the village enjoyed the Opening Ceremony on 18<sup>th</sup> August. A second picnic table and bench has just been installed thanks to the kind donation by the Community Events Group, which is sadly disbanding. We are very grateful to all members of the Group for their work. The playground would not have been completed nearly so well without the generosity and practical help from Colin Grant and Walter Frost and the hard work by Alan Mason and Phil Grimes and other members of the Parish Council.

## 3.3 Road Safety

Parish Councillor, George Buckle recognised the need for something to be done about the speed of vehicles travelling through Hales on the Old Yarmouth Road and has set up the Community Speed-watch Group. The success of the group has raised police awareness of the issue and Old Yarmouth Road is now one of a handful of speeding priority sites in South Norfolk.

## 3.4 Police Safety & Security

As you will be aware there has been a spate of break-ins and opportunistic robberies in the village. We do have a local Neighbourhood Watch which publishes an electronic newsletter for residents. If you don't already and would like to receive this please let the Coordinator, Alan Hale, know via his email: [alanhale8@icloud.com](mailto:alanhale8@icloud.com).

The police recently met with Parish Councillor, Andy Woodman, and have made the following observations and advised:

- Residents should securely lock property so that thieves are not given easy access. It's a good idea to check that your doors and locks are up to standard.
- Residents' help with the fight against crime would be appreciated - by looking out for and reporting suspicious activities – and not just on Facebook but to the police. You never know, you could provide the last piece of the jigsaw puzzle.
- Installation of alarm systems, cctv and dusk to dawn sensor-controlled security lighting helps to deter wrongdoers and provide potential evidence. Low level external lighting on houses also deters burglars. These measures should be borne in mind when making changes and improvements to properties.

On a positive note, we understand that the police have had some success in catching the perpetrators of our mini crime wave and they are grateful for the support of all residents in this matter.

## 3.5 Environmental Matters

# Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

Despite the loss of their shredder, the Composting Group processed 9 tons of garden waste, received £155 in donations for the resulting soil improver and a recycling credit of £573.81. This is thanks to Alan Mason and his team of composters.

The Parish Council has been in touch with South Norfolk Council regarding footpaths in the parishes and the maintenance of these. We remain in contact with the Countryside Access Officer as we work towards improving the standard of some of the footpaths.

You may also have seen spray paint used to highlight dog mess which has not been cleared up. This has a twofold purpose – to help pedestrians avoid stepping in it and also to hopefully send a message to the dog owners who have not cleared it up.

## 3.6 Thank You's

Thank you to Masala Gardens for generously providing us with refreshments at the end of this evening as well as arranging a buffet spread at the Playing Field Opening Ceremony last August.

The Parish Council are really grateful to our Norfolk County Councillor, Margaret Stone and our South Norfolk Councillor Kay Billig, both of whom have been tremendously supportive.

John Herring has now retired from Hales & Heckingham Parish Council having carried out the roles of Chairman and Clerk on a voluntary basis. He generously gave up much of his time in the service of the village and we thank him for it. We also thank Sam Matthews for his contributions to the Council. I and the rest of the Parish Council are also grateful to Alan Mason for agreeing to be co-opted back onto the Council for a further year.

## 4. The Year Ahead - 2019-2020 – The Chair presented the following summary:

During the coming year, the Parish Council will be working with Norfolk County Council to achieve the **completion of the landscaping along the A146 and on the roundabout**. We are also keen to know whether residents would be interested in planting other new areas around the village. Please let us know if you have any thoughts on this.

Parish Councillor, Phil Grimes is looking into an **environmental scheme** called “Don't Mow – Let it Grow” being developed in Northern Ireland. The project will focus on the conservation of semi-natural grassland over the next three years - specifically on the management of road verges and amenity grasslands.

It will look at different ways of managing semi-natural grasslands to show how small changes in management give big benefits to biodiversity and ecosystem services. This has particular relevance to Hales Green and our road verges.

We **continue to report potholes** to Norfolk County Council but this is something that all residents can do through this link: [Norfolk County Council](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolk-county-council) / or on their website: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/road-maintenance/potholes](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/road-maintenance/potholes) so it is not necessary to wait for the Parish Council to report them. Hopefully, the more of us reporting them the quicker they will be mended.

The **new bus shelter** to replace the damaged one will be installed during the next few weeks.

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With regards to **Planning**, as you are probably aware an Outline Planning Application for the development of houses north of Old Yarmouth Road was made to South Norfolk Council in 2018. This is likely to be determined in the next few weeks. We hope that this and the other developments in the village will enable the issue of speeding in the village to be further addressed through improvements to the design and landscaping around the Old Yarmouth Road at problem points.

**The Parish Council has five members** after the recent election and co-opting of Alan Mason. There are seven seats allocated to us. If you would like to know more about the work of the Parish Council and are interested in what happens in Hales and Heckingham please speak to any of us. We would be delighted to hear your views and hope that you might be **interested in learning more about how co-option onto the Council works**.

Also, if you would like to **get in touch with the Parish Council**, this can be done through our website and the Facebook page. All of our contact details are on the website.

**5. Budget Summary 2018-2019** – The Responsible Finance Officer presented the Summary – See Appendix 1.

## **6. Questions & Answers**

**6.1 Roundabout Safety** – A concern was raised regarding restricted visibility and inability to see other cars given high grasses and rapeseed. Norfolk Highways have highlighted that the roundabout had passed required safety tests, but visibility is being monitored and the rapeseed was recently flattened by councillors. The area will be sown with mixed flowers (likely to take place in the autumn) and the Parish Council will monitor very closely.

**6.2 Trees planted on east side of roundabout** – It was noted that these had not been properly staked so many were bent double. This has been highlighted to Norfolk Council and will be addressed.

## **7. Simon Barnes' Talk on Ways to Rewild Yourself**

Guest speaker - wildlife conservationist and local resident, Simon Barnes, gave an informative and inspiring talk on 'Rewilding Yourself'. Telling stories about 'Painted Ladies' and 6ft. long snakes in the Broads, he highlighted simple 'magic tricks' for getting closer to nature that included:

- Planting a buddleia: They attract butterflies of which there are 59 species in the UK;
- Placing some corrugated metal or roofing felt in your garden: As snakes love this for warmth;
- Carrying a plastic supermarket bag in your pocket: So you can always sit down and watch nature.

This was followed by questions and answers.

**Next Parish Council meeting: Wed. 12<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30pm.**

**The meeting was closed at 8.30pm when all adjourned for refreshments.**

E. Bannister, Clerk to the Council - 09-05-2019

# Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

## APPENDIX 1.

### HHPC Responsible Financial Officer's report to Annual Parish Meeting – May 2019

The Council's finances remain in good shape following a year of activity.

The Council has had a busy year financially. After paying for the bus shelters and putting significant funds into the playing field project we are left with acceptable funds in our bank accounts and this has enabled the Council to agree to finance the cost of a Clerk and Eleanor is a welcome addition to the Team. I want to mention the ongoing financial support both from Margaret Stone our County Councillor and Kay Mason Billig, our District Councillor at the time of writing this. Thank you both for your help during the Year.

Now that the roundabout and associated infrastructure and the playing field projects have been delivered the Council should have a quieter time financially.

A review of our budget shows expenditure amounting to £7289 against a budget of £8035. There are accounts due for Village Hall hire, some grounds maintenance and four month's salary for our Clerk. This means that we will be close to our budgeted spend although this includes £3000 invested in the playing field which will be a non-recurring item going forward. Also, within this expenditure is £974.00 for the Composting site although in practice all these costs are met from Restricted Funds rather than the Council's current account.

Balances on the bank account as at 31/03/2019 were:

Current account £7528.78, Deposit account £14117.63. Total funds equal £21646.41.

#### **Within the above total the Council holds restricted funds as follows:**

- Village Sign repairs: - £707.00 - no change from last year.
- Play Equipment: - £1321.48. The sum of £5500.00 was held this time last year but has been used to help with the new installation. The present sum is from Hales & Heckingham Community Events Group which has disbanded and has been allocated as requested to a new seat and table which has just been installed. Almost all this sum will be used to settle the invoice from the supplier.
- CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy): - all funds held (£2896.84) and received during the year, (£3466,21) have been allocated to the playing field installation. A total of £6362.44
- Composting Scheme: - holds funds of £2433.57 following the insurance payout following the break into the container and loss of the shredder.
- Restricted Funds total £4462.05.

Council indented for a 5% rise in our precept for 2019/2020 to assist with expenditure which is likely to exceed our income in the year.

AWM – Responsible Finance Officer for HHPC - 08/05/2019

# Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

## APPENDIX 2.

**Margaret Stone MSc.BA(Hons)**  
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01508 499 389  
**Norfolk County Councillor for Clavering Division**  
Chairman of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Parish or Urban areas within the Division: **Aldeby, Broome, Burgh St Peter with Wheatacre, Denton, Ditchingham, Earsham, Ellingham, Geldeston, Gillingham, Haddiscoe, Hales, Heckingham, Hedenham, Kirby Cane, Norton Subcourse, Raveningham, Stockton, Thurlton, Thwaite St Mary, Toft Monks, Topcroft, Wortwell, Alburgh**

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### My year as Chairman of Norfolk County Council

My challenge was to help inspire Norfolk women of all ages, now, tomorrow and the day after. My greatest wish is for all women to believe in themselves and to strive for greater things in life not just for themselves but for others too. In order to highlight this idea, we launched the first Norfolk Womens Charter on Norfolk Day last year and throughout the year have attended events where we saw women in charge of large organisations, women who flew Tornados, repaired fighter planes, were bricklayers and plumbers and 3 very impressive local women who were High Court Judges. All had the CAN DO attitude and we helped promote this in local schools.

We also attended many ceremonies commemorating 100 years following the end of WW1, 100s since the foundation of RAF and 100 years since women got the vote. We also were there to see and hear the last Tornadoe to be flown from our base at RAF Marham

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### Back to being a simple County Councillor now

But asked to be the Chairman of Health overview and Scrutiny panel. Investigate any issues within the health Service in Norfolk and scrutinise their work

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### Back to Cabinet and Scrutiny Governance at NCC as prior 2013

Committee system failed to deal with important decisions fast enough and therefore a return to the same system as adopted by National Government system and District councils

Voting recently mirrored the national frustration over Brexit and main parties losing seats to Independants and any other a party offering an alternative including LD

In my Division, which represents 4 Wards, we gained 2 Conservative members but lost 3 in other areas.

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### Highways

#### **£12.7m road improvement schemes nearing completion**

In November 2018 Norfolk received an additional £12.694m from the Government to spend on road maintenance. New concert Calvert's created and patching all over County

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### Hempnall Roundabout:

**Work re started after delay for nesting birds. Cost £4.5 million and should be completed by late summer.**

# Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

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## All Hallows'

Nursing Home contract has been given to Norse Care, Norfolk's largest Residential Care provider and wholly owned by County Council.

Agreement has now been reached between the trust and NorseCare Ltd. that it is the preferred provider for the transfer of the operation of All Hallows Nursing Home. Residents of the nursing home will therefore have their care maintained without disruption or a break in care.

Agreement has also been reached with Nightingale Homecare that it is the preferred provider for the transfer of All Hallows Homecare services. Clients of the homecare team will therefore have their care maintained without disturbance.

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## **£120m investment special school places to reduce transport costs going further afield**

Norfolk County Council will be investing £120m in special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision in the County

Examples: 3000 children in special needs and complex needs school in Norfolk

- A child in a standard foster placement = £39,000 per year
- A child in a residential placement = 150k+ per year
- A child with complex disabilities can be around £500k per year.
- A child attending a complex needs school = £48,000 per year
- A child in a Norfolk special school = £25,000 per year
- A child attending a specialist resource base = £11,000 per year
- **Typical cost of transport for a child travelling to a specialist education setting = £35,000 per year**

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## Parish Partnerships:

We continue to offer some matched funding for Highways schemes such as Speed Activated Monitoring SAMs and other highways furniture like Gateway structures as you enter Villages. There is also a much larger sum available but competitive, and/or shared within my Division of Clavering equating to £6,000. Go online to view at Norfolk County Council website

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# Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

## Where the money is spent 2019-20

Our total budget for 2019-20 is £1.401bn



\*Includes money set aside for interest and repayment of loans for capital projects (eg schools and roads) and pension payments

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