

BURTON UPON STATHER ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 25 April 2006 in the Village Hall, Burton upon Stather.

PRESENT Councillors G.M.Aykroyd, P.F.Bell, Mrs A.Bradley,
Mrs A.L.Campbell, Mrs B.Clark-Vessey, Mrs P.J.Cooper,
C.Curtis, R.W.Harris, G.A.Mackay, Mrs C.A.Middleton,
Mrs M.A.Richardson, S.Sowerby, N.F.Thornes.
North Lincolnshire Cllr A.Smith
PC Jeff Sewell
Mrs P.Denby – Parish Clerk
Approximately 8 members of the public.

**Councillor R.W.Harris, Chairman of Burton upon Stather Parish Council,
in the Chair.**

APOLOGIES for Absence were accepted from Councillors Mrs J.A.Cooper and M.Peace.

1. Minutes as circulated of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 25 April 2005 were accepted as a true record. There were no matters arising.

2. Police Report

Neighbourhood Beat Officer Jeff Sewell reported on the reorganisation of Humberside Police into 3 teams: violent and investigative crime team, an instant response team and a neighbourhood beat team. The latter dealt with minor crimes and was designed to involve other agencies in problem solving. Two police support workers were to be recruited from 8 May 2006.

He reported that there were few crimes logged in Burton compared to larger towns such as Winterton and Barton, but noted reports of damage done to play equipment at the playing field and to public property in Normanby. Youths continued to cause problems in St Andrew's churchyard.

PC Sewell stated that CCTV had been successfully used in Winterton and Barton to curb crime and anti social behaviour.

The chairman thanked PC Sewell for attending and urged residents to keep reporting incidents to the police.

3. Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council

Councillor R.W.Harris reported that the Parish, especially Burton itself, had had a very busy year as winner of the Best Kept Village Past Winners competition, the Northern Lincolnshire Village of the Year regional finalist and national winner of the Best Village for Older People in the north of England category.

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He paid tribute to the dedicated work of the Parish Council Village of the Year committee and the support from all the village organisations, particularly with their displays and presentations. Cllr Harris praised George Hughes for his excellent video about the village and Cllr Miles Aykroyd for his Powepoint presentation.

He also thanked Cllr Aykroyd for keeping the Burton upon Stather website up to date and Cllr Colin Curtis for the much appreciated quarterly parish newsletter. Both councillors put in many hours of unpaid work.

He stated that the Parish Council continued to work closely with Burton in Bloom and thanked the committee very much indeed for all their hard work in providing an additional stone planter in Thealby, spring and summer floral displays and new Christmas trees and decorations for winter.

Cllr Harris highlighted the diligent work of Cllr Steve Sowerby, the Chairman of Planning, who had helped the committee arrive at considered replies to North Lincolnshire Council, with some success.

The Parish Council continued to work on the new cemetery, where the electricity supply had been re-routed and overhead pole was about to be removed. The Council had decided to resurface the playing field car park during 2006-7 which would mean a future financial commitment, despite some grant aid towards the project.

He thanked the Village Hall Committee for preserving a wonderful asset for the village and the Playing Field Committee for all their dedicated hard work to try to improve their facilities.

Cllr Harris mentioned that the Parish Council supported the North Lincolnshire Council Streetright initiative, which dealt with litter and graffiti. The team could be reached on telephone number 297000.

Turning to the recently launched Burton Parish Plan, Cllr Harris explained that the Council had obtained a grant for the work, but that a Parish Plan Committee spent many unpaid hours planning the work. He hoped the responses from the questionnaires would help the Parish Council obtain grants and formulate an integrated plan for all parishioners and organisations in the future.

In conclusion, he thanked all his fellow councillors and the clerk for their hard work and support through the past year.

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4. Report from the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

Referring to a financial statement covering comparisons of income and expenditure patterns over the last 5 years, Mrs P. Denby explained how the Parish Council spent the precept, the tax levied on top of North Lincolnshire Council Tax, for the benefit of Burton, Normanby and Thealby. She confirmed that a simplified properly audited account would be distributed with a forthcoming newsletter.

A precept of £35,000 had been levied for the financial year ending 31 March 2006, which had risen to cover rising costs and capital expenditure involved in the new cemetery. Bank interest had doubled because the Council had judiciously opted to leave most of their money in a postal account, which fed a local cheque book account for a clear audit trail. Additional income of £250 came from filing PAYE and National Insurance returns online. The £850 income was made up of 2 prizes – one of £350 for building community life in general the Village of the Year competition, Northern Lincolnshire, and one of £500 for winning the best village for older people in the whole of the north of England.

At the beginning of the current financial year, 1 April 2006, £21,311.31 had been carried forward and a precept of £37,000 levied. The balance of over £21,300 included a capital budget of nearly £9000 for desperately needed work to resurface the playing field car park. It also included a grant from Defra of nearly £3000 to pay for work on the Parish Plan, which brought the revenue reserves down to £9,300.

Mrs Denby explained the expenditure over the last 5 years, particularly the Administration budget, which was made up of salary, insurances totalling over £4600, general office and property repair costs. She gave details of what the Parish owned: the Parish Office, the Village Hall, Glebe Paddock, the playing fields and new cemetery land behind the bowling green, together with 25 public seats, including the new seat donated by the Burton WI in Glebe Paddock, 6 bus shelters, grounds maintenance and office equipment, Glebe Paddock street lighting and decorative litter bins, all of which are logged on an asset register.

Mrs Denby, as clerk and responsible finance officer, was the only employee of the Council, contracted to work approximately 16 hours per week following a national review of pay and conditions in 2005. The Clerk's salary rose in line with National Association of Local Councils rates negotiated at national level, the same as the pension increases. Expenses were postage, telephone rental, calls, stationery and mileage, which she paid for and was later reimbursed upon production of invoices and accounts. The Office costs included lighting, heating, stationery, photocopier maintenance and copies, computer supplies, hall hire etc and also a training budget for councillors and the clerk. She was studying with the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Training Partnership and had almost finished the "Working with your Council" course which led to the Certificate in Local Council Administration. This in turn would be one of the criteria essential for the Parish Council to achieve "Quality Status".

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Audit costs were set to drop as the Council had engaged the services of a local internal auditor, Tony Porter. So far, the Parish finances had always received a clean bill of health and the Parish Council was under tight financial control with internal checks made by councillors, an “internal audit” made by someone completely separate from the Parish Council and an external audit made by the Audit Commission.

The Parish Council was responsible for the grounds maintenance of Burton Hills, Glebe Paddock and the new cemetery behind the bowling green. The Council paid for grass cutting at the Burton and Thealby Playing Fields.

The Parish Council also reimbursed grounds maintenance costs at St Andrew’s Churchyard under a formal agreement made back in 1976.

The cost of grounds maintenance in the parish was therefore quite high – over £7,300 including the new fencing which had been completed this year around the Burton Playing Field.

Grants are made to village organisations, which were deemed to be in need of financial assistance. The Village Hall had not received a grant, because of the success of its management committee in raising money by lettings. The Burton Playing Field Committee was still trying to get on the same footing by improving its facilities for lettings and had had a more generous settlement to try to help them achieve funding for their plans for a new building.

Mrs Denby explained that Section 137 was a category used to allow the Council to spend money for the benefit of the Parish in general, which is not covered by any other power, but that power was not often necessary as Parish and Town Councils had significant powers to spend money under various legislation. Expenditure previously classed as Section 137 had now been included in the Administration budget.

Turning to future expenditure, she explained that the Council had been building up a fund to meet the costs of the new cemetery, particularly the car park which had to be resurfaced before any burials could take place. The Council had just under £9000 in the current budget, grants totalling £10,000 from North Lincolnshire Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund and had applied to borrow a further £20,000 over 10 years from the Public Works Loan Board to fund the resurfacing this year, ready for the new cemetery being brought into use, possibly as soon as 2007 if necessary.

5. Report from the Village Hall Management Committee

David Faulks, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee, reported on the continued wide use of the Hall by diverse groups – from tea dances and exhibitions to young musicians workshops and stand up comedy.

Rental charges had had to rise with inflation, but, fortunately, they had not had any major unscheduled expenses to content with.

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Mr Faulks reported the sad death of Harold Goodson who had worked hard for the committee in so many ways.

He commented on the new licensing regulations, which meant that the Village Hall Committee had had to undergo risk assessments and comply with the new legislation, opting for a semi dry status.

He thanked the Parish Council for paying for the Village Hall Committee insurance and particularly thanked his fellow committee members, who ensured that the Village Hall remained at the heart of the community.

He asked Malcolm Bee, the Honorary Treasurer, to give a financial report. Mr Bee reported another a slight deficit this year. Income amounted to £7218.44 but expenditure was £7327.06, partly due to increased heating and lighting costs. The Committee anticipated spending between £900 - £1700 on future maintenance works, but was not planning any major works.

The Chairman thanked David Faulks, Malcolm Bee and the Village Hall Committee for all their hard work.

6. Report from the Burton upon Stather Playing Fields Association

The Chairman, Noel Thornes, thanked his fellow committee members for ensuring that the playing field facilities continued to be used by parishioners of all ages, particularly praising the work of Ann Bradley who had secured a grant to fund the new adventure trail in April 2005.

He thanked Claire and Paul Cowling for organising and supervising a Children's Activity Club for the summer months with the help of other parents. The PFA had supported the Club by buying equipment totalling £378.

The PFA had organised a Sunday Fun Day as part of the Burton in Bloom weekend with six a side football, penalty competition, carpet bowls, face painting, bouncy castles and refreshments. He thanked everyone who was involved.

He commented on the extensive use of the playing fields by the various football teams, both male and female, all of which were very successful. The high standard of the pitches was maintained with significant help from Graham Beech and some support from other team mangers.

The bowls club continued to run their own section with approximately 42 members and was open to all. They ran two teams in the Scunthorpe League.

He thanked Maureen Adkin for inspecting the children's play equipment regularly, but mentioned that someone else was now needed to take on the role. A recent inspection had revealed that the whole area needed to be replaced in the future and the Committee was working towards obtaining grants to fund it.

Commenting on approved plans for a new community recreation building, the estimated cost had risen to £600,000. The Parish Council had pledged £40,000 towards the total cost and North Lincolnshire Council £30,000. Mr Thornes continued to seek the remaining funding from every major funding body, but had twice been unsuccessful. He stressed that the building was essential, especially for young people who could not be accommodated in the Village Hall.

He thanked Barry Jackson for continuing to run the "200 Club" and his attached report. It had 146 members and had generated £7425 in prizes since July 2003. The current balance stood at £4200. Mrs Pat McKay had agreed to help Barry Jackson in the future.

He also thanked David Wenban for his continued hard work as treasurer. A closing balance of £2361.57 was recorded.

Looking to the future, he had asked all the football teams to form an umbrella group to manage their affairs. They had been asked to make sure that all had the necessary CRB clearance, half the cost of which the PFA would meet. The PFA had also agreed to provide up to £1500 from the 200 Club Lottery to assist in erecting permanent floodlights for use during hours of darkness.

He looked forward to the Burton Music Fest, organised by local people, due to take place 16-18 June 2006.

In conclusion, he asked for more volunteers for the PFA Committee, especially those whose children used the facilities. He thanked the Parish Council for its continued financial support and the Clerk, Pauline Denby, and the PFA secretary, Gill Thornes, for their help and support.

7. Thealby Play Area Committee

No one was present to give a report but the Treasurer had sent a balance sheet showing funds of £405.85

8. Any Other Business

i. Mr G.W.Robinson regretted the gradual degeneration of Burton Hills. He urged the Parish Council to debate the issue and produce a ten year plan to bring them back to their former glory.

ii. Mr A.H.Harrison urged North Lincolnshire Concillor A.Smith to press the case for increased parish funding with his colleagues, arguing that Scunthorpe should have to pay a separate precept.

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