

## **NORTHORPE PARISH ASSEMBLY**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00pm, on 15 March 2010, in the schoolroom of the Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, Northorpe.

Present: E Henson (Chairman), B Pryor, F Mosey, B Dunk, E M Eminson, Mr and Mrs G Beaman, N Montgomery, Rev. M Burson-Thomas

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

### **1. Minutes of the Assembly held on 23 March 2009**

The minutes were signed as a true record.

### **2 Matters Arising**

#### **a) Methodist Church**

Confirmation was given that planning permission had been given for change of use to a live-work unit.

#### **b) Flooding of the B1205**

Mr Beaman expressed concern about the debris resulting from hedge pruning blocking the ditches near the entrance to Cold Harbour Farm. This had contributed to the problem of flooding in that area.

#### **c) Traffic Survey**

The Chairman confirmed that a letter had recently been received from the Highways Officer about the survey and outcome of the Parish Council's request for a weight limit to be imposed on the road between Scotton and Northorpe. The survey had shown that there was low HGV use. In view of this and the fact that some local access by such vehicles was needed, no action was proposed. The clerk agreed to supply Brenda Dunk, the Village Champion, with a copy of the letter.

### **3 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman explained that, with effect from April 2010, West Lindsey District Council had withdrawn most of the subsidy it had previously given to parish councils and the cost of maintaining the cemetery. Despite this, the Parish Council had tried to keep the precept as low as possible by ending the provision of skips and increasing charges for the cemetery.

The Chairman referred to the hard work done by Brenda Dunk and Neil Montgomery, which had resulted in developments to the playing field, at no cost to the Parish Council. She also mentioned Brenda Dunk's role in bringing about improvements to the appearance of the village through her role as Village Champion.

She commented that the Parish Council continued to use its influence to convey the views of the village to the relevant authorities, albeit not always successfully. She thanked all the Parish Councillors for their support during the year.

#### **4 Church Hall**

Reverend Mike Burson-Thomas attended the meeting to inform villagers of the Parochial Church Council's intention to dispose of the Church Hall. There had been several attempts to find a use for the building that would secure its future, but none had been successful. The annual running costs of the building were more than £400 and the income was only £80. He confirmed that if the Hall were sold, the proceeds could be used for church purposes in the village.

Mrs Eminson commented that the Parochial Church Council could not afford to subsidise the building, as their priority was to maintain the church.

The Chairman said that she felt that village residents should be made aware of the situation, as, amongst other implications, the loss of the hall would mean that the Parish Council would have no place to meet. Mike Burson-Thomas suggested that the church could then become a multi-use building, providing a venue for meetings. He undertook to contact the diocese about the Hall's disposal. In the meantime the Chairman said that village residents would be informed and their comments would be passed on to the Parochial Church Council.

#### **5 Precept Report**

The Parish Council Clerk confirmed that the report had been circulated to every household in the village, so that they were all aware of how the money they contributed to the Parish Council was spent.

Mr Pryor raised the possibility of the Parish Council paying more to use the hall in order to keep it open. Mike Burson-Thomas wondered if, under the Open Spaces Act 1906, the Parish Council could challenge West Lindsey District Council's decision to withdraw its funding of the cemetery maintenance costs.

#### **6 Playing Field**

Neil Montgomery explained the background to the improvements planned to take place to the playing field. Children in the village did not have easy access to other play facilities and, having consulted families in Northorpe, it was clear that there was support for improvements. The children were asked what equipment they would like, and, having selected a suitable supplier, a plan had been drawn up, which villagers had been asked to comment on. Applications for funding had been made and a conditional offer of £9600 for the first phase had been received from Awards for All. An additional £500 had been promised from the PIP Fund. An application for the second phase of the improvements had recently been submitted.

Brenda Dunk and Neil Montgomery were thanked for their efforts that would be of great benefit to the children in the village.

#### **7 District/County Councillors' Report**

The Chairman read a report supplied by Councillor Parry. It referred to the fact that West Lindsey District Council had managed to keep the precept for

2010/11 down, and the limited success in recovering some of the investments in Icelandic banks.

West Lindsey District Council's plans for capital investment related to schemes in Gainsborough, but there appeared to be none locally to Northorpe.

It was noted that a new Chief Executive had recently been appointed.

An observation was made that the reason the District Council had been able to keep its expenditure down was that it had withdrawn subsidy from Parish Councils and passed on to them cemetery maintenance costs. It was hoped that Councillor Parry would be able to attend a meeting in the village in the near future.

## **8 Any Other Business**

### **a) Highways – Traffic Speed**

Concern was expressed at the speed of traffic passing through the village and the safety of children at the crossroads, which might become more of a problem following the arrival of new equipment in the playing field.

It was suggested that the matter should be brought to the attention of Councillor Underwood-Frost. However, Mr Pryor pointed out that during the 25 years he had lived in the village there had been only one accident at the cross roads, so it was unlikely that the County Council would give a high priority to road safety measures there.

The Chairman confirmed that the matter would be kept under review. Mike Burson-Thomas advised that Helen Freeston of Communitylinks might have some suggestions of action that could be taken to make children more aware of road safety matters.

### **b) Public Transport**

Confirmation was given that the InterConnect service was still available. This had to be booked in advance and was sometimes over subscribed.

### **c) Library Service**

There had been no support for the restoration of the mobile library service in the village.

### **d) Dog Fouling**

A complaint had been received from a village resident, which Councillor Dunk confirmed she would deal with through her role as Village Champion.

### **e) Neighbourhood Watch**

Neil Montgomery confirmed that the scheme had been re-established in the village, he was the co-ordinator and Mr R Dunk was the deputy. A meeting was taking place on 18 March at which he would raise the issue of rural policing.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the Assembly.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.