

Parish of Long Sutton
Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held at the Hall on
Tuesday, 3rd April 2007 at 7 p.m.

Present: Councillors: Mrs. J.R. Turner (Madam Chair), Mr. I.P. Eastment, Mr. M.J. Willoughby, Mr. K.O. Harding, Mr. R.G. Sargent, Mr. P.H. Vaughan, Mr. N.F. Laphorn Mr. R.C. Vaux and Mr. G.R. Cox. County Councillor Mr. D. Yeomans and 2 members of the public.

1. Minutes of last APM – Previously publicised were agreed and signed as a true record.

2. Matters Arising:

Village Signs: Enquiries have been made regarding ways in which these signs could be made more visible but the options would prove quite costly and it was decided that these should therefore be cleaned on a regular basis.

3. Madam Chair's Report 2006/2007

Madam Chair reported as follows:

“Another year has passed by so quickly, but the Parish still continue to cram as much as possible into it. Whether fundraising, socialising, meetings and general entertaining in what ever form, brings our community together.

PARISH PLAN.

This is a very important project that has brought people together to collectively form, what will be a very influential document for future references. It continues to be worked on, and I am confident that the end result will be well worth the effort. A thank you to everyone that came along to the Parish Party at the Golf Club last May, I hope you enjoyed yourselves and felt that you had got something out of it, even just to meet your neighbours! The responses to the questionnaires were excellent we were over whelmed by the response, and the comments were very informative. A special thanks to Steve Sensier who is the project manager, and continues to process all the information with his helpers. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this in whatever capacity. We look forward to the end result in our Parish Plan.

PLANNING

I feel this has gone better than expected with a good relationship with the Planners, I feel our comments are taken into consideration, not always in our favour, but there is room for compromise. The Planners have very strict guide lines with applications especially in conservation areas, and areas beyond the development lines, this can only protect building into the countryside even more, and I feel that this can only be a bonus.

Affordable Housing within the Parish is still ongoing, with the need for a suitable site. This project will need a lot more time and thought for it to happen.

FINANCE

I was pleased that we were able to keep the precept at £5000 this financial year. The carry over is comfortable, and our expected outgoings for this year have been budgeted accordingly.

HIGHWAYS

Nick Laphorn has done a fine job in implementing Highway issues with the relevant departments. The responses have been very good. Correspondence has been kept up to date, and we are kept informed of jobs to be done around the Parish. We hope this continues. Thank you Nick.

VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall continues to flourish under the chairmanship of Patrick Vaughan and the Committee. Bookings are up on last year. The funds are in a very healthy position. Maintenance is taking a high priority at the moment as it seems everything needs replacing or updating. The Jubilee Pavilion is taking on a major face lift under the guidance of Rupert Cox and the cricket club. This can only bring the building up to a better standard giving the Hall Committee an opportunity to expand the use of the Pavilion through the winter months when it is out of action. Thank you to Patrick Vaughan and the Committee. Keep up the good work.

APPEARANCE OF THE VILLAGE.

Thanks go to Robin Davies for continuing to cut the grass around the Parish. The village green is a very important feature of the Parish, and it is very often commented on how lucky we are to have such a beautiful asset in the heart of our village. Unfortunately it has been recently spoilt by persistent garbage and litter. Tighter controls need to be implemented to be able to prosecute these persistent offenders.

Our Tree Warden Barbara Gasson has done a great job in keeping an eye on the trees around the Parish. Unfortunately we have lost 3 more trees down Ilchester Lane because of disease; these have been removed, and hopefully will be replaced by new trees to fill in the gaps. [Thanks go to Mick Willoughby for undertaking this job.] The trees around the green will be pollard in the Autumn. Hopefully they will be tidied around the bottom before then. All the trees look as though they need tidying around the Parish, hopefully this could be put on the list of priorities for the autumn.

Fundraising for all the organisations within the Parish continue to pull the community together. Which ever you chose to support I hope you enjoyed the events and got to know the people that makeup our community where you live.

A special thanks goes to the Clerk Paula Allen for her help and guidance over the last 3 years in my position as Madam Chair.

A special Thank You to Peter Ellis for his expertise, guidance and experience as his role of legal representative for the Parish Council. His time, composure and level-headedness, was reassuring on many occasions.

I feel the time has come to step down from the Parish Council for the present time as I put myself forward as a contender for District Councillor.

I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for all their support and assistance in the last 3 years.

I wish the new Council all the very best. ”

4. Any Other Business

Members of the public were invited to speak.

Mr Ellis said that he deprecated the derogatory statements that Mr Taylor had exhibited publicly about him and Mr Taylor's exhibiting an "off the record" letter from which two important paragraphs had been blanked out.

Mr Ellis denied Mr Taylor's claim that he had changed his advice to the PC over whether the PC could legally grant a vehicular right of way across a part of the Green to Farringdon House (previously the Old School). He quoted from previous correspondence to show that at the earlier stages he had never had in mind at all the possibility of an easement containing conditions which would adequately safeguard the Village's Victorian rights, such as were contained in the proposal which he subsequently offered. He had consistently stated that an unconditional easement which would not satisfactorily safeguard the parishioners' rights would be illegal but he had agreed to recommend to the PC an easement in which those rights were guaranteed.

Mr Ellis also pointed out that even if he had changed his mind on these matters it would have no bearing on the current position between Mr Taylor and the PC. It is also relevant that the PC had been taking its legal advice from Hedleys since September 2006. Therefore he felt the slurs were not only unwarranted but completely pointless.

Mr Taylor stated that he considered that he had the right to exhibit Mr Ellis's letter because Mr Ellis had said that all the correspondence between them should be open and that he (Mr Taylor) could send it to his Solicitors. Mr Taylor said that the correspondence and evidences he held, which anyone was welcome to see if they came to his house, proved that he was right concerning Mr Ellis's changing his advice to the PC and over other matters relevant to his claimed right of way. (The PC has repeatedly turned down this offer by Mr Taylor in writing and orally on the basis that it believed that the very complex legal matters involved were best discussed between experts i.e. the two parties' solicitors.)

Madam Chair thanked those who attended and closed the meeting at 7.35pm