

**MINUTES OF STOW LONGA ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT
ST. BOTOLPH'S CHURCH, ON WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2016 AT 8 PM**

Present: Councillors Hayes (Chairman), Allen, Butcher, Humfryes and Young, the Parish Clerk (Mr D Stowell) and 20 members of the public.

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs Murdoch, Whidborne and Croft.

1. **The minutes of the previous meeting held 13 May 2015**, having being displayed on the village notice board and website were taken as read, approved and then signed by the Chairman.

2. **Parish Council Chairman's Report 2015/16**

Meetings

The Parish Council met on 8 separate occasions since the last Annual Parish Meeting. There was a 60% attendance record by Councillors at those meetings.

The Clerk continues to publish the minutes of the Parish Council meetings on the village notice board and the website.

During the period since the last Annual Parish Meeting the Parish Council has dealt with the following issues:

Planning applications

There were a number of planning matters dealt with in the year, but the only significant one concerned new houses at 5 The Lane.

Finance

During the year the Parish Council dealt with its financial obligations including both an internal and an external audit. The results of both of these audits were satisfactory.

The precept has been set at £3,300 for the 2016/17 fiscal year, the same as last year.

Repairs and maintenance

As mentioned last year, the Parish Council has been looking at the damage to the verge opposite the Green, which has seen significant damage in the last couple of years. We have obtained estimates of the likely costs of kerbing it and these are: £8,500 for conservation kerbing and £6,100 for standard kerbing.

We applied to be considered for a discretionary award out of a fund controlled by Cambridgeshire Highways to help with the cost. Given the number of councils applying for limited funds our chances were small and we did not succeed. We are considering reapplying in 2016 but with the promise of a larger contribution from our own funds to see if that tips the balance in our favour.

We are also concerned with the damage caused by the digging around the phone box. There is a need for some remedial work to remove some of the stones and level the surface. A working party will be organised when we are confident that the work has stopped.

Resurfacing of the main road through the village is unlikely to take place for two years at least. The Parish Council are to consider putting pressure on Cambridgeshire Highways to bring this forward in view of the numbers of times the road has been dug up in relation to services.

We now have a new person responsible for our area at Cambridgeshire Highways so it is our intention to raise our concerns again.

We are pursuing a number of issues including re-siting the post box, repairing the cross on the Green and repairing and repainting the benches around the village.

Health and Safety

The Parish Council assets are regularly inspected to ensure that there are no health and safety issues. Where necessary, appropriate action has been taken to ensure that any potentially dangerous matters are dealt with.

The play area equipment is regularly inspected by Wicksteed.

Finally I would like to express my thanks to all the Councillors and the Clerk for their support and work over the last year.

I also want to thank other who helps with a range of other work including planting flowers around the village sign, mowing the Green and organising the rota, Speed watch, Trustees of the Town Lands Charity and anyone else who I may have missed out.

3. **Parish Council Financial Report for 2015/16**

The Parish Clerk, Mr D Stowell, presented and explained the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015.

4. **Stow Longa Town Lands Trust – Jim Humfryes**

Highlights

Diane Coles suffers from MS and is wheelchair-bound. This has prevented her husband Paul from being able to get into the bathroom with her to give her a bath.

Paul & Diane have made several personal financial sacrifices in order to convert the bathroom into a wet room, and the Charity granted them £2,000 towards the costs. The job was completed earlier this year, and Diane is now able to enjoy a shower.

In addition, the Charity gave out Christmas presents to some residents to the total value of £200. If you have, or you know of someone who has, either fallen on hard times or needs financial help because of illness or other incapacity, please get in touch with us and we'll see how we might be able to help.

Summary of Income and Expenditure

As a registered charity, we are required to submit a statement to the Charity Commission annually. Details for the financial year ending 31st Dec 2015, and submitted on 20th March 2016 are: Income: £1,389, Spending: £2,200

It should be noted that I made an incorrect entry on the annual report, and I have since written to the Charity Commission to inform them of the anomaly.

New Trustee Required - Owing to personal circumstances, Jacqui Young has decided to step down from her role as a Trustee of the Charity. We are therefore looking for someone to replace her. The role is not an arduous one; the Trustees meet a couple of times a year or as needed, to discuss and make any key decisions such as what grants to make and to whom. I would like to thank Jacqui for filling the role since 2013.

Nomination of new Trustee

Following an invitation from the Chairman for anyone interested in being a trustee to put their name forward, Mr Matthew Stenson expressed an interest and was duly nominated.

5. **Reports from other organisations**

Speedwatch – Jim Humfryes

Paul Cole – a Police-approved trainer, delivered Speedwatch training to 9 people on 12th March at Swifts House. This was followed by a 'hands on' session on the main road.

Since then, Speedwatch sessions have been conducted on the main road as well as outside Sleepy Dell. The results (28/335 doing over 35mph) suggest that the equipment plus volunteers in high-viz jackets is effective in encouraging drivers to slow down.

Stow Longa shares the equipment with five other villages. David (Stowell) has provided me with contact details for the other villages, and I plan to set up a sharing rota very soon.

Friends of St. Botolph's

Dr Rawlinson explained that the Friends support ways to use the facilities of the church for village activities and to maintain the fabric of the building for the benefit of future generations. He invited everyone to give their full support to the necessary fund raising

6. **Public Open Forum.**

The Chairman reported that he had received a letter from Andrew Murdoch raising a number of environmental matters. It was agreed that this be passed to the Parish Council. Jon Young reported that Superfast Broadband which was expected to be available last Christmas, will hopefully be delivered by the end of June.

In the absence of any further business the meeting closed at 8.35 pm