

**MINUTES OF STOW LONGA ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT
ST. BOTOLPH'S CHURCH, ON MONDAY 16 MAY 2011 AT 8 PM**

Present: Councillors Hayes (Chairman), Allen, Humfryes, Young, the Parish Clerk (Mr D Stowell), and 17 members of the public.

1. **The minutes of the previous meeting held 10 May 2010** were read, approved and then signed by the Chairman.
2. **Parish Council Chairman's Report 2010 / 2011**
The Chairman gave a report as appended hereto. In response to his request for any comments on the report several people spoke about the question of reducing the speed limit, the consensus being that they agreed with the Parish Council's stance that traffic calming measures supported by street lighting are not required.
3. **Financial Report for 2010/2011**
The Parish Clerk, Mr D Stowell, presented the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011.
4. **Town Lands Charity** – The Chairman reported that as Mr Andrew Murdoch had withdrawn his nomination there are now only two trustees in office . John Keal and Martin Allen . hence there are two vacancies for which he invited nominations. Jim Humfryes expressed a willingness to be nominated and this was gratefully accepted by the meeting. Amy Howard also expressed a willingness to be nominated but explained that she would not be able to take up appointment until after August. The Chairman thanked her for her interest which would be considered by the Parish Council at that time if no further nominations were received in the meantime.
5. **Reports from other organisations**
Parochial Church Council (PCC)
Richard Whidborne reported that representatives of the Ely Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (DAC) had visited the Church in February to see what the PCC has in mind regarding modifications to the Church to facilitate community use. These could include provision of toilets, improving access for the disabled, removal of the pews and provision of moveable seating, but the Chancel area would remain unaltered.
Mr Whidborne said that the DAC visitors were supportive of these ideas but before the PCC can proceed further we need to ask ourselves whether we want to do it, who would use it, what it would be used for and how we would run it. The PCC will welcome comments from villagers regarding these questions. Several persons present spoke in favour of the idea.
6. **Open Forum**
John Dickins spoke of the danger of walking down Spaldwick Road due to the very narrow verges just beyond the built up area and suggested that the possibility of improvements should be investigated.
7. **Vacancy on Parish Council**
The Chairman pointed out that as there were only 4 nominations at the recent election there is now one vacancy which the Parish Council will fill by co-option. He asked any interested person to contact the Clerk as soon as possible. Mrs Jenny Reynolds indicated her interest in applying and was advised to write to the Clerk.

In the absence of any further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55 pm

APPENDIX

Chairman's report

Meetings

The Parish Council met on 10 separate occasions since the last Annual Parish Meeting.

There was a 90% attendance record by Councillors at those meetings.

There was one Extraordinary Parish Meeting in the year.

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

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

Planning applications

There were 5 routine planning matters that the Council were asked to consider this year.

There was nothing remarkable regarding any of these issues. There have been no enforcement issues.

Proposed Bicton Wind Farm

As parishioners will be aware, we held an open Parish Meeting during the summer to discuss the planning application. Of those that spoke, only one was in favour of the wind farm. All the other speakers were not in favour.

Following that meeting the Parish Council recommended refusal of the application. The matter went to the HDC Development Management Panel on 17 January 2011 at which the Chairman spoke on behalf of the village. The Development Management Panel unanimously rejected the application. Broadview have now appealed to the Secretary of State and the enquiry hearing is to be held in Huntingdon on 16 August 2011, and is scheduled to last for 8 days. It is intended that a representative of the Parish Council speak at the hearing.

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 once more been set at £3,000 for the 2011/12 fiscal year. This amount was set after considering the budgeted expenditure for the forthcoming year both in respect of overheads but also in respect of possible contributions to improvements to the infrastructure.

Repairs and maintenance

Most village assets were repainted in the course of last summer.

As mentioned last year we proposed having the Green kerbed along the side of the Chapel. We were able to have the whole Green kerbed with additional funding provided by HDC. We were able to achieve the full kerbing at a cost to the Parish Council of only £1,500, which is less than 25% of the total cost.

Relocating the post box to a site next to the telegraph pole outside the Chapel.

The Council paid for the planting area around the village sign at a cost of £461.

Health and Safety

Martin Allen regularly inspects the Parish Council assets 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 Wickstead.

Speed limits

The reduction of the speed limit to 30 mph is an ongoing issue. The latest position is that the police have objected to a reduction unless speed reduction measures are put in place. Further they say that any traffic calming measures will only be acceptable if there is adequate street lighting, which itself is not acceptable in terms of cost, the environment and as a matter of principle. The Parish Council is trying to commence a dialogue with the Police on the matter.

Village Cross

Slow progress is being made towards the reinstatement of the village cross. It is painfully slow, due to the tardiness of the parties we have to deal with. I would like to thank Max Turner for his help with this.

Finally

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