

Hibaldstow Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of Hibaldstow Annual Parish Meeting held at 6.30pm on Thursday 16th March 2023 at the Village Hall, Station Road.

Present: Cllr Allaby, Cllr Brooks (Chairman), Cllr Borrill, Cllr Mawdsley, Cllr North, Cllr Pickering, Cllr Riley & Cllr Stothard.

Also present: Ward Cllr Foster, 2 residents & Clerk to the Council – Deb Hotson.

1. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Cllrs Done and Cllr Elletson.

2. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 24th March 2022.

Resolved - The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting were approved as a true and correct record.

3. To receive the Chairman's report

Cllr Brooks read out his report.

The 2022/23 Precept of £20,000, has also been set for 2023/24, which has been utilised for Governance, Administration and Maintenance together with grants of £2,125 including, North Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre £ 1100 and the Village Voice £750.

The Parish Council participated in the Christmas Tree and Festival of Lights run by Lindsey Lodge Hospice. A Christmas tree was erected, by agreement with David Eames in the frontage of the Church Hall, where residents hung baubles and donated.

Councillors and the Clerk continue to undertake generic and refresher training and represent the Council on NALC - National Assembly, ERNLLCA - NLDC & Executive Committee, NLC - Liaison and NATS.

We continue to respond to various contentious planning applications and in October the 48 residential properties at land at Station Road received approval following an appeal for reserved matters for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

Various retrospective planning applications for a temporary change of use for the storage of prefabricated units on the Airfield were submitted which has resulted in one approval and two refusals by NLC.

The Parish Council supported the planning application for listed building consent to carry out repairs due to fire damage and associated works on Hibaldstow Bridge, received approval in October and works have started this month.

NLC reported in May 2021 that, the litter and dog bins are being reviewed has finally been completed with the removal of some dog bins being replaced with `all litter` bins, however the Parish Council are considering additional bins.

Following this evenings PCM we will have completed our four-year term of office with a full complement of eleven Councillors, with Colin Mawdsley and Jonathan North being co-opted at the September 2022 meeting.

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Only three members endured the full four-year term, one whom has completed almost 19 years, well done David Stothard.

Interested residents are requested to contact the Clerk for further information to apply to be a Parish Councillor – closing date 4.00pm on Tuesday 4th April 2023.

Due to NLC Ridge Ward boundary changes after the Elections on 4th May 2023 we will be a Two Councillor Ward with Kirton-in-Lindsey and Redbourne parishes.

Finally, thanks to Deb for keeping the Finances, Governance, and Councillors in order.

Cemetery

Following a request from a grave owner the small box hedge between the ashes and burials section of the cemetery was cut back on the burial side.

The gates have recently been removed and refurbished in memory of Pete Hollingsworth by his son and nephew who originally made the gates.

Closed Churchyard

Following a search for contractors to repair the capping to the Churchyard Wall a quotation was agreed and the order placed in September 2022, however despite regularly requesting a start date, there has been no response and further quotes are being sourced.

4. To receive the draft Parish Council Accounts 2022/23.

The Clerk summarised the unaudited accounts for 2022/23. Once audited by the Internal Auditor will be signed off by the Council and published at their next meeting.

5. To receive the Village Hall Committee report.

Minutes of the AGM were read out by Cllr Mawdsley.

Trustee Report 2022

The new Village Hall Committee took over the management of the hall in late 2021 at a Special General Meeting and then confirmed at the AGM in January 2022. The committee members were entirely new, there was no continuity from the previous committee, although a few of the new members had been involved in the past, so whilst we had some familiarity with the premises and how it (used to) run, we all needed to become familiar with current practises. This was not helped by a very limited handover from previous committee members. Although we should mention that Gerald Hutchinson endeavoured to pass on all the information that he had.

As a result of the above, our immediate priority was to get the 'basics' in place, examples included:

- Ensuring we were up to date with Charity Commission declarations.
- Reviewing utility providers
- Understanding how the Caretaker operated
- Carrying out overdue maintenance
- Fire safety inspections
- Reinstating the online booking and invoicing system

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Beyond the basics, we felt our next priority was to try to increase the use of the hall. Two obvious approaches to this: organising events ourselves, and promoting the use of the hall by others for their own events.

Promoting the hall in village publications and forums has seen an increase in weekend bookings and ad hoc events like children's parties. The forthcoming pantomime is a good example of this.

Events organised during 2022 by the committee were: quiz and bingo nights, curry night, and the film club. Very much a learning experience and our offering will continue to evolve in the future. Whilst the principal purpose of our social events in the last year hasn't been fundraising, it's been more about creating social events where people of Hibaldstow can come together, it is still important that they at least break even and are not a financial burden the hall. The accounts show that overall, our events made a £700 surplus in the year, with only the film club making a small loss (the format of this will evolve this year).

We should also note the Jubilee event help in May on a cold and blustery day and organised by the Hall Committee. This was the first time a 'village gala' type event has been held for many years. Loads of people came to the event and had a great time. As a result, the village can expect similar events in the future.

We are just finalising the details of our programme of events for 2023 and will publicise details as soon as they are agreed but expect some old favourites and some new events as well. It is worth saying that our primary purpose is to provide a quality venue for people in the village to use, so whilst we will organise a programme of social events, if people want some sort of club or society then the hall committee will help and assist, but it will always require an enthusiast to take the lead.

We have been thinking about the future and how we improve the facilities and ensure the financial viability of the hall. As a result of this we received a grant to improve our energy efficiency and are part way through a scheme to fit solar panels, low energy fittings (heating, water heater and lighting) and will replacing emergence lighting. This scheme will cost about £25,000 in total of which the grant covered £20,000.

For the future we are looking at further improvements and evaluating potential funding opportunities. We are looking at improving the sports facilities (mainly changing rooms etc), improvements to the tennis courts and further improvements to the hall. These are all dependent on gaining funding so no promises at this stage.

We are also looking a revising our constitution. The current one is very old, has some restrictions that are no longer necessary and leaves trustees with some personal liability. We are looking to moving to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) during the coming year. This is the recommended method for setting up charities like ours following changes in charity law a few years ago.

That's all positive, but financially the hall doesn't pay its way. In 2022 we made an operating loss of over £2000 (that's ignoring costs and income generated for improvement

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work), that has reduced our reserves and please remember that the £5000 for the energy efficiency work not covered by the grant will have to be paid in the next month. We don't mind using some of reserves to improve our facilities, like for the current scheme, but an on-going operating loss at the current level will bankrupt the hall in a very short time.

Everyone is aware of the recent increases in energy costs and the general rises in prices in all areas, the hall is hugely impacted by this. Utilities are one of our biggest areas of expenditure, but all areas of expenditure have risen significantly.

For 2023 we have had to increase our hire rates. We have also taken the opportunity to simplify our cost structure so now all hall users use the same simple hire rates. For most groups this is a 33% rise, going from £9/hr to £12/hr, however for some hall users the rise is higher than this as there have been special rates in place for reasons lost in history, these special rates have all been removed.

Whilst we appreciate this is a big rise, it still doesn't cover the increase in our costs over time. I was booking secretary up to 2015 and looking at my old records I can see that the standard rate increased from £8/hr to £9/hr at the start of 2014, i.e. this is the first increase in NINE years. This increase is long overdue, and we should warn users that the new rates will not be static for another nine years. Clubs using the hall should build into their plans an increase in hire costs that reflect increases in the cost of providing the facility. For reference, we are told that a hall in a neighbouring village has just increased their standard hourly rate from £8 to £20.

Having said that, we will continue to try and keep our costs as low as possible. The biggest way we can do this is by increasing the use of the hall as that increases our rental income, hence the focus on events and promoting the hall.

We think this is an exciting time for the hall. You will see further improvements to the facilities over the coming years, an increase in the number of social events and we will promote the hall as a venue for clubs and societies.

Accounts

All outstanding accounts have now been submitted to the charity commission. Provisional 2022 result posted an operational loss of £3141.91.

Appointment of Trustees

The following trustees were appointed for 2023.

Co-Chair	Alan Smith	
Treasurer	Richard Riley	
Secretary	Colin Mawdsley	
Trustees	Christine Riley	Nigel Whitaker
	Gill Whitaker	Julie Mawdsley
	Helen Lyons	Ann Petite
	Philip King	

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6. To receive the Cemetery / closed Churchyard report.

As detailed in item 3.

7. To receive a report from the Village Voice Representative.

Cllr Mawdsley provided the following report:

There are 6 copies a year.

There has been a 50% increase in printing costs and the group has looked at reducing these costs.

Cllr North joined the meeting at 6.50pm.

A book has been produced on the history of the parish and all proceeds will be given towards the cost of the Village Voice.

Cllr Stothard stated that the Parish Council had provided grant funding this year but this was not included on the front page with the other donors. Cllr Mawdsley to ensure this is added.

Cllr Brooks stated that there used to be regular meetings and the Parish Council contributed to the celebration of the delivery people.

8. Open Forum for Public Participation

A resident raised concerns about the weeds that are a meter high and could be a fire hazard on the Station Road proposed building land. The resident was advised to report to NLC Enforcement although Cllr Foster stated that there wasn't a lot that NLC could do unless there are vermin and then this should be reported to the Environment Department.

The meeting closed at 7pm.