

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Held at Hoton Village Hall on Monday, 13th May 2013 at 8:00pm

In attendance: Cllr Cassell (Chairman, Hoton Parish Council), Cllr Isbister (Vice Chairman, Hoton Parish Council), Cllr Williams, Cllr Seymour, Mrs Blain (Parish Clerk) and one member of the public.

Agenda Items

1. **Apologies for Absence** None.

2. **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman gave his annual report:

Welcome. And thank you for your attendance. This report will in many ways be strikingly similar to last year's – and the previous year's. And it will be brief.

As always, I would like to start with some thanks.

To our county councillor and our borough councillor for their continued support for our efforts to maintain and improve the quality of life in the village, and for placing those efforts in the context of both the wolds and the county.

And thanks, too, to our local beat officers.

It's a pity that – unusually - none of these is present tonight.

Particularly, I'd like to thank my fellow councillors for their work and for their contribution to the well-being of the village. They form a very effective team, if currently a little depleted in numbers, and are a pleasure to work with. And they benefit from the support of a very efficient and professional Parish Clerk.

Continuing with the thanks, we should acknowledge the contributions made by David Kennedy, Glen Smith and Rob Dargie during their time as councillors.

This time last year, I referred to the imagination, commitment and effort that was going into the projects for the Olympic torch and the Jubilee celebrations. This year I'd like to acknowledge the success of both these events. Olympic torch day was a truly memorable event which banished cynicism and left everyone smiling. It was brought together by Cllr Isbister's vision and leadership, supported by many people putting in the hours to make it work. The aerobics girls retaking the streets, and the lunch (with commemorative plaques) for residents of a certain age, were two of the fondest memories. And we appreciated our MP's attendance at the lunch.

And the Jubilee events, efficiently organised and marshalled by David Kennedy, similarly brought the village together socially during the day and during the evening. The conjunction of this type of event will probably never happen again, but I feel we need to look for every opportunity to bring the village together, supporting and enhancing the efforts already made by the Village Hall committee.

A further small-scale achievement worth noting is the acquisition and refurbishment of the phone box, which had been completed just before last year's annual meeting. It has been well-used by certain sections of the village, and one task for the coming year is to ensure that its use is well-managed and overseen.

Our other priorities for the coming year are:

- to work closely with the Village Hall committee to ensure that the hall continues to be a well-maintained focal point for village life;
- to ensure that the playing field is properly maintained and developed to meet the needs of the village (and I must thank Vera Williams for being willing to put in a very significant

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amount of time to lead this effort – and David Seymour for his contribution since he joined the council, not to mention the working party;

- to institute measures to reduce speeding through the village. The working party has begun to bring forward specific, costed suggestions, which the council will be considering over the coming weeks.

Last year I referred to the need to “maintain an awareness of the possible implications of the need to build a large number of houses in the area. We will need to develop close liaison with other Wolds councils in this matter.” We have kept in close touch with Charnwood Borough Council on the matter of development planning and will continue to do so. We will also be meeting with other local councils in June, with the speculative proposals for Cotes giving the discussions added urgency.

A continuing frustration is the difficulty in attracting people to the parish council; we continue to have vacancies; a council with a full complement is potentially a stronger, more representative body. Nevertheless, I should like to end by re-iterating my appreciation of my colleagues' hard work on behalf of the village and invite questions from the public.

3. Annual Statement of Accounts for 2012-2013 (Unaudited)

The unaudited statement of accounts was presented.

4. Questions from Members of the Public

The member of the public commented that the play area and tennis courts are fantastic facilities but that it would be good to see them used more.

Response: The Playing Field is well used, but it depends upon what time of the day that you are there. The tennis courts are very well used and there are often several groups of people using different areas of the Playing Field at the same time.

The meeting closed at 8:14pm.

These minutes are a true and accurate record _____ Date_____

Cllr Cassell, Chairman