

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Village Hall, Lakenheath
Monday 22nd May 2017 at 7.00pm.

Present: - Cllr Morley (Chairman), 2 members of the Parish Council, Councillor Noble and 13 members of the public were present.

The Chairman, Edward Morley, welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies – Inspector Mark Shipton and Cllrs Gyte, Brown, Gentle, Whitehand, Lucas and Marston.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2016 were available to all present. The Chairman allowed those present time to read the minutes, which were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

POLICE MATTERS

The clerk passed on apologies from Inspector Mark Shipton, who had unfortunately been double booked. However, he is happy to take any questions by email at mark.shipton@suffolk.pnn.police.uk.

PAROCHIAL CHARITIES

The Clerk to Lakenheath Consolidated Charities, Mrs Rissen, gave the report for the year:

“In December 2016, 267 applications were received by the Trustees of Lakenheath Consolidated Charities from the aged and needy of the Parish, 24 of whom were over 90 years of age and 1 who was over 100. After considering the applications, the Trustees agreed that each applicant would receive £30 with those over 90 receiving £35. The applicant who was 100 years of age received £40, making a total of £8,170 to be distributed. The Trustees agreed to maintain the age of eligibility for the 2017 distribution at 68”.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Councillor Colin Noble gave his report:

- SCC are investing more money into highways and although they would like to invest more it is a financial balancing act with a £500m annual spend and savings of £80m to be made each year. SCC will continue to work with contractors to improve more surface dressing. The Eriswell to Mildenhall Road has been lowered to 40mph, redressed and new markings added to make it safer. Wingfield Road remains a concern and is being looked at to improve.
- Ofsted have given childcare a good rating.
- Education is improving with 90% of schools either good or outstanding.
- Care Homes, an important issue to many have had funding increased.
- Continues to work hard with District Council and engage with Parish Council.
- Successful in recent election with 52.5% of Row Heath vote.
- Library funding has been cut by £6.5m but all remain open. Run by Suffolk Libraries a not for profit company.

Questions to Cllr Noble

Will there be an amalgamation of councils?

The amalgamation of FHDC and St Eds is under consultation. Unfortunately Norfolk didn't want devolution with Suffolk, although more work will be done together to make savings.

Amalgamating back room services could save.

There is one public estate for Suffolk why cannot this be extended to payroll, HR etc. There are for example currently 15 payroll services working across Suffolk. FHDC already share some services such as Council Tax Revenue Services.

London boroughs seem to be further on in the process.

Collection services have been reduced from 578 to 40 in East Anglia.

Why has Lakenheath got the highest council tax in Forest Heath?

County and district elements are the same for all. The parish council precept is the highest in FHDC and 3rd in Suffolk.

St Edmundsbury borough's council tax is higher than FHDC and would Councillors be lost?

I am opposed to a council tax increase in Row Heath. If the councils merge, the boundary commission will carry out a review and the wards decided which usually results in less councillors. It is a maths formula similar to 4,000 people = 2 councillors.

Would this result in more costs with travel expenses etc.?

The savings made from less officers are massive compared to less councillors. Councillors are good value for money.

I understand that St Eds officers are already struggling for office space.

I disagree, there is plenty of space with room to expand. The building is not over staffed and it is being considered to move the Police Service into the old NHS buildings at the rear.

If officers leave Mildenhall will they receive travel expenses to Bury St Edmunds?

No there will be no travel expenses, relocation or expenses. There will be more home working and field work.

Cllr Noble thanked parishioners for their questions and advised that leaflets will be distributed giving thanks for re-election and his contact details.

The chairman thanked Cllr Noble for attending and Cllr Noble left the meeting.

ANNUAL REPORT

Copies of the Annual Report were available to all present. There were no matters arising.

PARISHIONERS' ISSUES

Confusion was expressed over the road closure notices in the High Street when the event is Brandon Carnival.

It was advised that the Celtic Cross / Maids Cross poems are now on display in the Brendan Fulham Centre.

Disappointment was expressed over so many Councillors and Inspector Mark Shipton being absent.

In closing, the Chairman thanked all who had taken the time to attend the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7:25pm.