

**Minutes of Wickhambrook Annual Parish Meeting
18 May 2017 in the MSC Pavilion**

The meeting was opened at 7.30 p.m. by the Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr P Couzens.
Present Cllrs J Barton and K Sammons,
Clerk S Thorburn
9 members of the public were present.

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllrs K Merritt, J Midwood and J Wilson
Borough Councillor C Pollington

2. Minutes of the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting.

With the approval of the meeting these were taken as read and signed.

3. Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting.

4. Annual presentation of the Alf Hicks Crystal Biscuit Barrel.

The Parish Council had unanimously agreed that the Biscuit Barrel be awarded to Mrs Maggie Elers.
The Chairman made the presentation and Mrs Elers thanked the Parish Council for the award.

5. Report from Police representative.

A written report had been submitted by PS394 Matt Gilbert, a member of the Haverhill Safer
Neighbourhood Team (SNT). (Report attached)

6. Report by Chairman of the Parish Council

The annual parish meeting gives an opportunity to look over the previous 12 months activities.

Donations

- Have been made to various charitable organisations, the Over 60's Christmas Party and the First Aid in attendance at the Carnival.

Meetings

The Parish Council has:

- held 11 full Council meetings and 6 Estates Committee meetings.
- considered 42 planning applications
- signed 97 cheques for services to the village
- transferred £1950 to MSC for recycling bottles and paper

Local Council Award Scheme

David Wheeler the SALC area Chairman and SALC board member attended the Parish Council meeting on 30 March to present the certificate (framed certificate will be on the table) for the Foundation Stage of this award. Wickhambrook Parish Council is one of few in Suffolk to have gained this prestigious recognition. The letter confirming the award read 'The Award is evidence of the council's commitment to ongoing improvement, development, good governance and good practice in managing its business, finances and service to the community.'

The Panel believes the award demonstrates that the council has a strong commitment to excellence in public service. The Panel was impressed by the responsiveness of the council to the comments from the Panel with further action and evidence being readily and comprehensively provided.'

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Chairman

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Date

Ongoing Issues from the previous report:

- Flooding in the village is a regular agenda topic with assurances from Suffolk Highways division that all the drains will be cleansed.
- Lighting on the footpath from MSC to Browns Close has now been installed.

Speeding in the village is being monitored by a VAS machine that has five locations and takes a record of the speed vehicles are reaching as they pass. This information can then be reported and may result in the instigation of a police speed check, by working closely with the County Councillor and the Police the correct formatting of the data has now been established. The Parish Council has recently made the decision to purchase a new VAS machine exclusively for use in Wickhambrook.

The Chairman thanked the Councillors and Clerk for their support over the previous twelve months.

7. Report by Chairman of the Estates Committee

Once again, it has been a busy year for the Estates committee not only ensuring that all the regular tasks are undertaken but also working on, or working towards, other projects.

Playgrounds

- The Bury Road playground has had new fencing, health and safety signage and a litter bin, that will also accommodate dog waste, installed. Regular weekly inspections are now in place and undertaken by a local volunteer. The area has been added to the grass cutting schedule and the trees pruned by the Parish Council Tree Warden. There are plans to add a further piece of equipment
- The condition of the skate park has been the subject of much discussion and a number of options are currently being considered to ensure the long-term use of the area is ensured. Quotes have been obtained, ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous (a complete facelift for £100,000 – not an option) and a decision on the most cost-effective solution will be taken later on in the year.

Village litter picks

- A litter pick took place in July and November 2016 with the March 2017 having to be moved to April due to the inclement weather conditions. The July date is helpful to clear any remaining litter from the Carnival and the November date after the fireworks. A local resident advertised the Spring litter pick on the community facebook page which proved successful in attracting volunteers.

Cemetery

- The Parish Council was pleased to be granted an £8000 fund from the Tesco Groundworks scheme. A detailed application was submitted and the money awarded given by Tesco from the sale of 5p bags. It has enabled the Parish Council to expand the plans for the Memorial Garden which will now incorporate an area for the scattering of ashes previously not available at the cemetery and enable a long overdue facelift to the Chapel The Estates Committee is working closely with the contractor to get best possible value from the grant.

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Chairman

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Date

In general:

- Dog fouling is still an issue due to a very few inconsiderate dog owners but the Parish Council has continued to do everything possible to address this problem.
 - Care of village greens has produced good results with Moor Green re-instated by the installation of white posts which has protected it and enabled the turf to re-establish.
 - Regular inspections of the cemetery, churchyard, six acres, public trees and, of course, the play areas continue to be made by committee members.
- Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Estates Committee for their continued support during the last year and to warn them that we have another busy year ahead.

8. Parish Council Financial Report.

Copies of the Financial Statement comparison for the previous two years were on display. The Clerk stated that the budget for the year had been carefully monitored against spending resulting in an increase in funds held at the bank of £6479. Income and expenditure figures with noticeable variances were explained and earmarked funds.

9. Reports by County and Borough Councillors

The report from Borough Councillor C. Pollington would be given at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 25 May 2017.

County Councillor M. Evans reported:

Looking back on the last twelve months Highways and Education had been two of the priority topics.

Highways:

The County Council would learn from previous mistakes and was transforming the service County wide with specialist teams proving an efficient way of working, drainage and street lighting already in place. A meeting had taken place with the department controlling the deployment of the speed camera van who prioritised when and where to send the van. In some areas of Suffolk the speed control signage was incorrect and this was to be rectified. Special Constables had the power to issue speeding tickets and it may be a way forward to encourage them to operate speed checks. The Police and Crime Commissioner would be written to regarding the grants to purchase equipment.

Education:

This had improved across the County progressively since 2014. Fairer funding for schools was an issue with a campaign for rural schools.

Devolution post the election was expected to take the direction of a push for devolved power with Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury linking up enabling the streamlining of different teams and authorities.

Care and safeguarding vulnerable children had taken priority in the County with costs difficult to assess in advance of meeting the immediate needs of a vulnerable child.

The County Councillor gave thanks for the support in the recent local elections.

10. Introduction to becoming a Community First Responder

There was no representative at the meeting to present this item.

11. Report from village clubs and societies.

Reports were presented by representatives from the History Society, Wickhambrook W.I., Wickhambrook Youth Football Club and Wickhambrook Primary School. Written reports from the Bowls Club and MSC Hall Trustees were handed to all at the meeting and referred to by the Chairman. All hardcopy reports presented or submitted attached in the minutes file.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 8.20 pm. I confirm the above to be a true record of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18 May 2017.

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Chairman

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Date