

Rocklands Parish Council (RPC)
Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held in Rocklands Village Hall
7.00pm on Monday 8th April 2013

Present: Peter Smith Chair
Nicola Southgate Vice Chair
Shirley Colenutt
David Howie
David Witt
Cath Jones

Kim Rushforth Clerk

Also present: 5 members of the public and the County Councillor

The chair Cllr. Peter Smith welcomed everybody to the Annual Parish Meeting.

1. To consider accepting apologies for absence

RESOLVED to accept apologies from Cllr. Roger Steel and District Cllr. Bill Smith. Both were away on business.

2. To approve the minutes of the last parish meeting (Annual Assembly) on Monday 2nd April 2012

RESOLVED to approve the minutes that had been circulated prior to the meeting, as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair, Cllr. Peter Smith.

3. To discuss any matters arising from the minutes, not on the agenda

The two boys that had been patrolling the village looking for safety issues had been asked not to continue for their own safety, but were currently talking to Stephen Betts to see how they could continue to help to keep the village safe from crime in other ways.

4. To hear the Chairman's report

The chair Cllr. Peter Smith delivered his report.

I think this year could best be described in nautical terms as "Steady as she goes". The rather mundane matters with which the Parish Council deals have continued as usual, with giving an opinion on planning applications still being a major part of the Council's work.

There have been some notable events in the village during the year, which has not directly been within the Parish Council's remit but which the Council has supported wherever possible. The development of the Playing Fields into one of the best facilities in the area has involved the Council in legal work as the ultimate owner of the land. The Council has also participated in trying to resolve the future of the White Hart Public House, and the Council has supported the activities surrounding the Queen's Jubilee. In all these cases, Councillors have been active in different roles.

Once again the Council raised its precept to try to ensure that it was able to meet the demands made upon it, and though the figure seems large in percentage terms, in cash terms it is quite small. The precept remains among the lowest in the area (and we do have street lighting) Finally may I thank my fellow Councillors for the work that they undertake in what are often busy lives, and I would particularly like to commend our Clerk, Kim, for her work for the Council keeping us up to date and dealing with what seems to be an ever growing mountain of paperwork.

Signed

Date

Cllr. Southgate proposed and Cllr. Colenutt seconded a vote of thanks to Cllr. Smith.

5. To receive reports by County and District Councillors

County Councillor Jordan reported the council had had to make lots of savings over the last 3 years amounting to £141 million. This 3 year period was coming to an end and would now have to plan to make similar savings over the next 3 years. The problem is with revenue and not capital. He said it had been a challenging year. They had lost their Chief Executive. They had to become better at communication, more outward looking and at all times to keep the service levels up. The picture was not rosy, but they were doing the best they could. Cllr. Jordan commented that it had been a bad year for Tarmac with the bad weather over the winter, but they should be on top of potholes by the end of May.

The public were asked if they had any questions for Cllr. Jordan. There were no questions from the public but Cllr. Peter Smith mentioned that the District Council had stopped funding Parish Council elections. Cllr. Jordan confirmed that the process of electing a new Parish Councillor had cost Yaxham, for example, £1700. Notice of a vacancy, is on a four year cycle, and would be in 2 years time. Need to budget for possible elections next year when the precept is set.

Cllr. Peter Smith thanked Cllr. Jordan for his report and for his interest in the village.

No report was received from District Councillor Smith.

6. To receive comments from the public

David Jones thanked everybody on the Parish Council. He feels there is a deep need to raise a few issues for the future. Good that we all love our village and want to do the best for it. David mentioned the strength of the playing fields committee and what they had achieved, the lively, well used village hall and the school federation formed with Great Ellingham School. David was concerned about the dynamics within the village, in particular, the situation with the village pub and the village shop. Saddened that there has been an emerging picture of the village which he has not recognised and perhaps may have portrayed the village people as vindictive. David commented that the shop was struggling but even if it were to be used more, the situation still remained that the owners were living on the post office wages, losing money on the shop and were looking to retire, or at least to take a well earned holiday after many years.

The meeting closed at 7.22pm.

Signed

Date