

Hemington, Hardington & Foxcote Parish

Annual Parish Meeting 2012

held at 7.30pm on 9 May 2012 in Faulkland Village Hall

Present: nine parishioners, including councillors

In attendance: County Councillor M. Ellis, R. Campbell (minute taker)

1. Minutes of the 2011 Annual Parish Meeting

These were agreed to be a true record and were signed by the Chairman, Edward Drewe, Chair of the Parish Council

2. Chairman's report

Mr Drewe welcomed nine parishioners, including councillors. He noted the following.

- In May 2011, for the first time since 1995, there had been a contested election, with seven candidates for the six vacancies on the Parish Council. He welcomed new Members Francis Green from Faulkland and Phil Roberts from Hemington.
- During the year there had only just been a quorum for some meetings, due to ill-health. Clashes between parish council and Mendip planning board meetings had meant that Councillor Drewe had himself missed some meetings.
- The parish council had made recommendations on more than 20 planning applications scattered across the parish during the year and had supported all of them. An appeal against a planning refusal at Laverton had been allowed, to the parish council's amazement. The PC had recommended refusal of application.
- The cost of running the council had been held to the same level as the previous year in spite of increases in the cost of insurance, grass cutting and salaries. The council holds a sum in the recommended range against unforeseen needs which may occur.
- Due diligence and annual risk assessment had been carried out as required. The council had resolved to hold a weekly off-site computer archive and for a councillor to verify the bank reconciliation quarterly.
- Damage to the play equipment at Faulkland had again been experienced but was about to be repaired.
- Lord Hylton had kindly offered land on the east side of Faulkland for allotments, which had been accepted. Progress, to date only small, had taken place, with a new fence, opening to the site and the start on the car parking area. Unfortunately there had been a delay due to provision of alternative access to the remaining part of the field and the weather had not helped in recent weeks.
- A new flagpole had still to be erected; replacement of the solar panel for the western end traffic calming sign, which had been stolen, was in hand.

- Finally, Cllr Drewe reported a welcome increase in the number of parishioners coming to parish council meetings and interacting in a helpful manner with the matters being discussed.

3. County Councillor's report

The report is attached to these minutes, of which it forms part.

4. District Councillor's report

Cllr Drewe said that when he was elected in May 2010 he did not know what to expect. He had been appointed to the planning board and the licensing board and was first assistant to a cabinet member. He had attended all planning and licensing committee meetings and also licensing sub-committee meetings where matters dealt with had included taxi driver licensing and dealing with pubs which had experienced riots. In these matters he was dealing with other people's livelihoods. Sitting on sub-committees he had set the council tax and listened to how big problems are dealt with when there is little money. The number of officers had been pruned and the amount of accommodation reduced, making space for other services such as the police and citizens advice bureau to be housed in the council building. He mentioned initiatives being considered to combat rural isolation, where communities were without shops or bus services. He looked forward to the coming year.

5. Parish Council accounts

The audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2012 were presented and adopted.

6. Other business

None

The meeting ended at 8pm