

STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 31st May 2016.

Attending: Cllr Denham (Chairman), Cllrs Cooke, Curtis, Harrison, Jones and Lawrence.

NCC Cllr Marie Strong, Acting Parish Clerk Di Dann

5 members of the public

1. Welcome and to consider apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. NNDC Cllr Fitzpatrick had sent apologies as had PC Pegden. Geraldine Green had sent apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest by Councillors

There were no declarations.

3. Receive an update from Victoria Egan of the National Trust concerning the Stiffkey Saltmarshes Car Park Project

Victoria advised that the Car Park Project had now secured funding and would be done in two phases. The repair to the potholes in the entrance area of the car park would be done on 14th June. The contractor was Wordingham Plant Hire. She hoped that disruption would be kept to a minimum. Regarding the second phase, as the car park was in the centre of the triple SSI, planning permission would be needed to strip back the grass and make the improvements to the car park, including the repair of the potholes in the car park area and installation of French drains (shingle). They also hoped to retrieve the car park data counter which had been installed but had been lost. The National Trust would advise if the work would require closure of the car park. The work was planned for some time in the Autumn. Two assistant rangers would help with the project management. The signs would be erected during the next month. The dog bin would also be installed as would a dog bag dispenser unit. She thanked the parish council for agreeing to fund the emptying of the bin.

The National Trust was waiting for a report from Natural England on "Coastal Access".

4. The Chairman's Report (refer attached)

This was circulated and the Chairman gave a brief summary from his report.

5. Receive other Reports

5.1 Receive a report from County Councillor Marie Strong.

SPC APM Minutes May 2016

4 pages, 2 page attachment

DRAFT until agreed at APM 2017

Syrian Refugees A paper on the situation in relation to Norfolk can be found on the county council website for the Policy and Resources Committee. Following the committee meeting on 31 May the item will now be discussed at full Council on 25 July.

Devolution The latest update received on 31 May was that at the Council meeting on 27 June 2016 the proposal for devolution to Norfolk and Suffolk - developed from the East Anglia Devolution Deal signed by Government and the Leaders at the time of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will be considered by full council. (together with the proposed governance arrangements). With the council's consent, the Scheme will then be published for public consultation. The results of the public consultation would then be reported at the end of August and, in accordance with the legislative process would be passed to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The Secretary of State would then draft an Order which would come back to the Council for decision at the October Council meeting. More details can be found on the devolution website which includes comprehensive FAQs about the deal. This is regularly updated: www.eastangliadevo.co.uk

Parish Partnership This is the scheme whereby a town or parish council puts forward an application for a project, say a SAM2 speed warning system, and the county matches the funding. The 2016/17 schemes were approved by the Environment Development and Transport Committee in March so delivery is now underway. This successful scheme continues and letters inviting bids for 2017/18 will be issued in June with a bid deadline of December, followed by assessment and Committee approval next March. Councils can get their thinking caps on but there will also be suggestions in the letter as to favoured projects.

There was a discussion regarding broadband, the infrastructure and BT. Cllr Strong advised that those with complaints should write to their provider in the first instance giving their name and contact details. It was noted that the Chairman had written to BT on 16th May but had not had a reply. He would write again concerning the wirings. The Clerk would contact Highways concerning outstanding repairs and the need to clear the drains, and site the silt so that it did not return again into the drains. Potholes previously advised had not been repaired. A site meeting with Cllr Strong would be arranged.

5.2 Report from NNDC Cllr Fitzpatrick. The clerk read the report. This advised that it was the 10th anniversary of the RNLI working with NNDC in the provision of the beach patrols (lifeguards) along the north Norfolk coast. In 2015 lifeguards rescued 10 people in three hours from Wells beach. NNDC had agreed a budget for the compulsory purchase of long term empty properties. Mutually acceptable solutions with property owners would be considered before such moves. NNDC Big Society Funds. Applications for the September round of grants should be received by 8th August. Members were concerned that NNDC councilors had not attended parish council meetings Cllr Hester had attended on only as had Cllr Fitzpatrick. A letter would be sent to the CEO of NNDC expressing concerns.

5.3 Police Report. PC Pegden had advised that there were no crimes to report.

5.4 Receive any other reports from parish organisations

5.4.1 Stiffkey Local History Group. It had been a good year. Members remain low, about 30, but the Group is able to keep viable despite the fact that fees are still only £5 per annum. This is due to the generous work that is given by the members. In the past year there has been a successful August exhibition in the church, where the local farming practices and families through time were highlighted. Refreshments were served which raised about £500 for church funds along with a visit from a local group of vintage tractors. The Group raised £250 for itself. The Group has helped the Parish Council to reorganise and digitize Parish records. The Group has planted a beech tree in the church yard with a memorial plaque to those who died, were injured or suffered in WW1 from Stiffkey and Cockthorpe. In December the Group had an interesting talk from R. Jefferson on "Bodies on the beach" a story of a wartime tragedy when many bodies were washed up on this coast and buried there. The completed pill box restoration has resulted in the box being included in a publication by NNDC of a Norfolk WW1 pillbox trail. The Group has purchased a screen and projector and are now hoping to load information onto memory sticks to form a history group archive and be able to make presentations. Books are now out of print, with one copy only left.

With regard to the Group's suggestions for a resurrected village hall: a centrally located externally welcoming building; good lighting internally & externally; adequate heating; comfortable seating for a minimum of 25; exhibition space; kitchen facilities & crockery, enabling light refreshments to be served; toilets; car parking for a minimum of 10 cars (this considered very important). Secure storage for S.L.H.G. equipment and archive.

5.4.2 Rescue Wooden Boats (RWB) RWB continues to consolidate its position as a part of Stiffkey life. For those who do not know, our aim is to restore selected local traditionally built working boats and to educate the public with regard to the dying traditions in the fishing industry on the Norfolk coast. 2016 saw RWB complete the huge £1000 pound project of the full restoration of Dunkirk Little Ship, ex RLNI Lifeboat, "LUCY LAVERS". She took to the water in May 2015 and within 4 days was on her way to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Dunkirk evacuation. Despite a few exciting moments (a net around the propeller) and a lot of pumping as she had not been in the water for 18 years she returned safely to Wells. She now takes rides around the harbour there. Whelk boat "HARVESTER" has had some major work done and will go back into the water at Blakeney Pit for the summer. Another 'OPERATION DYNAMO' boat, "BESSIE" now 80 years old will be a priority for the coming year. Well that's the plan; however, we always have to be versatile as from time to time others claim our urgent attention and funds. A stock of 8 boats now wait for repairs. The visitor centre has had some refurbishment (ongoing) including a new display about the Anti-Aircraft Artillery Training Camp there and the Whirligig along the Greens. The visitor centre has been renamed as the MARITIME HERITAGE CENTRE. The Education Room is complete now and is available for hire for certain functions, talks are given too. The Centre is always looking for more volunteers and

volunteers do not have to be knowledgeable about fishing or boats. A variety of skills and no one will be pressurised into anything they are not happy with.

5.4.3 Stiffkey Social Services Committee. A brief report was given by Chris Cooke. He advised that it had recently purchased a new cutter for the field. A grant application had been submitted to the BIG Society Fund for play equipment. The Love Norfolk Grant had not yet been spent as the outcome of the BSG was awaited.

5.4.4 The Parish Church, St John the Baptist. Heather Harrison gave a report. The Church was struggling along with all the other village organisations. The upkeep of the church, churchyard and the church fabric is becoming more and more difficult to maintain. Baptism, marriage and funeral services will continue to be needed but with these comes the responsibility of keeping the church open. £7250 had to be found in 2015 as the part of the Parish Share and the Rector’s expenses. The Church Insurance was £1095. This covers only fire, storm damage and terrorism, public and employer liability. There is no theft or rebuild cover. General running costs amounted to £500. The Church has very few resources and if things carry on as they are year after year, the church will close a living building. The Norfolk Churches Trust will be hard put to help the many struggling churches. It is said that the Church of England is very rich but this does not make the parish church position any different. Whatever decisions are made regarding the Village Hall it would perhaps be sensible to somehow join forces to raise enough money each year to cover the basic costs of each building. This would require commitment and would probably come down to the same few people each time. As a footnote the report said “It would be sad if this village of Stiffkey in the next few years became a collection of houses, a small shop providing that survives, ditto the cricket club and a pub.”

5.4.5 Cricket Club. A brief report was given by Davy Jackson the treasurer of the Club. There were two matches a month in the Summer.

5.4.6 Village Hall Committee. A brief report was given by the Chairman Ian Curtis. Since taking over as Chairman he had arranged fire and electrical assessments and had had the fire extinguishers replaced and the electrical inspection undertaken. The results of the inspection would be considered at the next committee meeting. The Santander accounts are being brought up to date and signatories amended. A meeting for fund raising and village participation will be arranged shortly.

6. Public Opportunity for Questions to Councillors

Pill Box and Whirligigg. The NT was able to confirm that the Pill Box would be included on the new Car Park sign. The Whirligigg would also have a sign.

Highways. Concern at the fading white lines at Bridge Street and the need for double yellow lines. Highways Engineer would be invited to come to the parish to see this and the potholes in the main road previously reported.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.

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Chairman
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Date