

FISHTOFT PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs V Clark (Clerk), 2 Frith Bank, BOSTON, PE22 7BA

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Notes of the Annual Fishtoft Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 5 May 2021

via video conference **due to Covid-19 restrictions**

(These notes will be amended/approved at the next Annual Parish Meeting before being signed)

Present: Councillor Elizabeth Armstrong (Chairman), 9 members of the public and the Clerk to the council, Mrs Victoria Clark.

The meeting started at 6:30pm

1. Welcome and report from the Chairman of the meeting
 - The Chairman welcomed those attending –
 - See Appendix A
2. Notes from the Annual Parish meeting held on Monday 13th May 2019: To resolve as a correct record by those that attended last year's meeting and for the Chairman of the meeting to sign the official minutes
 - These notes have not been located in the parish council's records and no members have received them and so cannot be approved
 - The 2019 notes will be approved at the next Parish Meeting
 - A member of the council will contact the previous Clerk in order to try and gain a copy
3. Financial report
 - See Appendix B
4. Short overview of the past 2 years from outside bodies
 - Cllr. Ordway gave an overview of St. Leonards Hospital Trust
 - See Appendix C
5. Short comments and statements from residents
 - No comments were made

The meeting closed at 6:48pm

Appendix A

Chairman's Report

What an unprecedented year this has been with the Covid pandemic. This has impacted on everyone and on some more than others, with unfortunate outcomes. As there was no Annual meeting last year due to the Covid restrictions some of this report will mention specifics for the period May 2019/20.

As a Parish Council we have had to forego face to face meetings and instead conduct our meetings via Zoom. This has been somewhat of a challenge for various reasons; some of our members struggle to hear conversations clearly and at times we have experienced technical difficulties. But I'm pleased to say that we do appear to have found a way forward. The Covid vaccines are proving successful in saving lives and helping us all to get back to normality and FP Councillors seem to have mastered the art of Zooming.

Matters of concern to the Community that have been raised with FPC during the year are speeding, the state of the roads, grass cutting, fly tipping and dog fouling and of course planning applications.

The issue of speeding through the village and approaching junctions has been discussed and raised with Highways in order to seek a solution. Unfortunately, Highways are unwilling to consider options that will impact on their budget restraints. FPC is in ongoing discussions with Sibsey PC and Highways in a joint effort to reduce speeding on the A16 between Boston and Sibsey. FPC is reviewing its options on speeding initiatives in a bid to reduce speeding through the village and elsewhere in the Parish.

Raising awareness of the "fixmystreet" webpage is helping to improve the reporting and repairing of potholes, though the state of the roads in the Parish remains generally poor.

We did have a few complaints that some of the grassed areas had not been cut. These complaints were dealt with once the Clerk explained that there had been a significant wet period. This meant that our contractor, T A Blackamore, was unable to cut any of the grassed areas and that it would take time to catch up on his schedule once the weather improved. I'm pleased to report that T A Blackamore has agreed to continue our contract for the period 2021/22 with no increase in cost.

Fly tipping and dog fouling continue to be a menace. It may be that some people are not reporting those they see dog fouling for fear of reprisals or being seen as 'the nasty neighbour'. However, I fear the situation will not improve unless more dog owners are reported. We need to get the message across that allowing your dog to foul a public area is not acceptable.

Fly tipping has been on the increase in the Parish. This may perhaps be due to the restrictions introduced by the Household Waste Recycling Centre in Bittern Way, Boston during the Covid pandemic.. It has also been suggested that perhaps people are not checking that they are using legitimate and licensed waste contractors for the removal of their rubbish. It could also be because there are still those in the community who are not aware of or familiar with the BBC reporting site which could help catch the culprits.

Planning applications continue to be an emotive issue. As Parish Councillors it is, of course, our job to review all applications objectively and submit our comments in the best interests of our Parish Community as a whole, even though some people may disagree with the outcomes.

Our Fishtoft400 Project has not progressed as anticipated this year due to Covid restrictions. We have been unable to meet with the Boston Woodcarvers who are creating artworks for us. North Sea Camp has been unable to continue their good work clearing the paths through the woods near the Pumping station, again due to Covid. However, the walking map produced by Cllr Ordway has been printed and is in the process of being distributed to local schools before being circulated to hotels and tourist offices. The buoy gifted to BBC by the Port of Boston Authority and subsequently gifted to FPC is still waiting for a base to be constructed. This is expected early May once

the danger of frost has passed. The Fishtoft Playing Fields Committee has kindly agreed for the buoy to be placed on the Fishtoft Playing Fields.

Once the buoy is in situ it is hoped that work can begin on the artwork. Transported in conjunction with BBC & LCC is progressing well with the art structure at Scotia Creek near to the Pilgrim Memorial site. The Environment Agency is progressing with raising the river banks as part of the areas flood defences. When works are completed access to the Pilgrim Memorial site and the car park will be improved and the area will be promoted as a tourist destination.

The Fishtoft Fun Day, which was intended to address issues relating to Rural Isolation in the Community, has been postponed twice due to the weather and then Covid. We still hold the funds and still intend to try again to hold the event at some point during the coming year.

So moving on to some good news; since our last Annual Meeting we have lost three Parish Councillors, Cllrs John Harrison, Ossie Snell and Helen Staples. However we have welcomed four new PC members – Cllr Joff Williams, Cllr Helen Crawford, Cllr Roly Ashley and Cllr Linda Taylor.

We also said goodbye to our Parish Clerk, Mrs Kathy Partridge and welcomed a new Clerk Mrs Victoria Clark.

Our Finances remain stable with careful consideration given to ensuring we have sufficient funds available for normal day to day expenses and emergencies.

By reallocation funds to other areas we have been able to maintain our Precept at the current level without any increase for the coming year. We hope this will be appreciated by our Parish Community many of whom may have lost income during the current pandemic. It will also help offset any increases imposed by BBC, LCC and the PCC.

Appendix B

Finance Report

INCOME

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Balance brought forward from 2019-2020 | 28,356.41 |
| Precept minus footway maintenance of £4,454.89 | 29,305.64 |
| Allotment rent | 2,984.68 |
| VAT refund & Wayleave | 4,011.18 |
| Investment | 20,229.37 |
| Total | 84,887.28 |

Funds Held

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Fishtoft funday | 1,724.11 |
| Fishtoft 400 | 10,500.00 |

72,663.17

EXPENDITURE

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Unpresented in 2019-2020 | 4,349.75 |
| Membership, Insurance, Audit costs & Video conferencing | 1,542.47 |
| Staff costs | 3,900.38 |
| War memorial, Grass Maintenance & Witham Forth | 11,189.90 |
| Phone, stationery, broadband & laptop costs | 519.16 |
| VAT | 3,086.51 |
| Other | 85.00 |
| Fishtoft 400 | 1,520.00 |
| Total | 26,193.17 |

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|------------------|----------|
| Unpresented chqs | 1,280.46 |
|------------------|----------|

24,912.71

Balance as of 31 March 2021 **59,974.57**

Appendix C

St. Leonards Hospital Trust

Thought to be the fourth oldest charity in the country with a rich and varied 800+ year old history St Leonards Hospital Trust present objective continues to be the provision of ten almshouse, built 1873/74 on Willoughby Road, Boston. These be to men aged over 60 or disabled, inhabitants of the Borough of Boston, with preference to persons resided in the ancient parish of Skirbeck area. Attempts are made to ensure one person is a retired merchant seaman in respect of the Muster Roll Trust incorporated in 2005.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic this year has been one of thinking outside the box to ensure we can continue this work in a safe manner for all concerned. There are 8 trustees who usually meet regularly to manage the affairs, but this year have resorted to communicating via Email only.

We employ one part time Clerk/Welfare Office who normally makes a bi-weekly visit to the residents, however when pandemic circumstances demanded, he kindly replaced this with a minimum of a weekly telephone call and advised then of additional support and help available to them in these challenging times. He also generously made himself available by telephone at all hours, which needless to say some took full advantage of.

We continued to maintain the communal garden throughout, ensured gas safety checks, etc, were still done and carried out emergency repairs such as water leaks and failed boiler replacement, ensuring any workmen followed the shielding guidelines.

Due to lockdown restrictions we felt unable to carry our our annual summer meet&greet followed by the annual inspection for residents and Trustees. Subsequently just fellow trustee Cllr J. Noble and I made a short inspection in eight of the almshouses with prior permission of the residents, respecting the concerns of the other two in not allowing access.

In January 2020 our longest serving resident left after 25 years and the property remained vacant for several months due to the difficulties of face to face interviews. We eventually interviewed two applicants at Fishtoft Pavilion. Sadly, due to personal circumstances, the chosen applicant only remained a few weeks. We therefore offered the vacancy to the other applicant who I am pleased to say is very happy and has settled in well.

Despite the challenges of a difficult year due to Covid-19 a strong community spirit amongst residents has flourished. And though the extended empty property has adversely affected our income I am pleased to report prudent management over the years ensures the St Leonards Hospital Trust is financially sound, has been audited, and all Charity Commission and Regulatory Returns done.

May I remind the Parish Council my fifth, four year term, as their representative on St Leonards Hospital Trust has been completed. Selection of a representative for the next four years is required at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Cllr Margaret Ordway
Chairman
St Leonards Hospital Trust