

# HECKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## **Minutes of the Annual Heckington Parish/Community Meeting held in the Village Hall, High Street, Heckington on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022 commencing at 7.30pm.**

### **Attendance:**

Chairman and resident - Cllr Mrs J Palmer

Minute taker and resident – Julie Hudson, Clerk

Other attendees –

5 x Guest Speakers

12 x Residents (including 4 P/Cllrs and 1 D/Cllr)

### **1. Welcome and opening remarks by the Chairman**

Councillor Mrs J Palmer, holding the role of Chairman of this meeting, welcomed everyone and gave a short Fire Safety evacuation instruction.

### **2. Parish Council Report – Councillor Mrs Jan Palmer, Chairman Heckington Parish Council**

I have the privilege of being Chairman of this Council, but have to emphasise, I work with a great team of people, including our staff, to run what I hope is a progressive Council, we endeavour to be proactive rather than reactive.

We had the pleasure of welcoming Mandy Cooke to our ranks, who brings a wealth of experience with her, having led several agencies and is finding her feet within the parameters of working with the Council. We now have another vacancy.

The Council continues to look after its main obligations, the Cemetery, Allotments and Library. All of which present their respective challenges. However I am pleased to report that the library, which is run entirely by volunteers is getting very busy. The allotments likewise, nearly all of which are occupied, and have a substantial waiting list.

We have had to spend a considerable amount of money on attention to our many trees. Most trees need maintenance, pruning and general care – if this is omitted, many are lost. However, we have now had the magnificent scotch pines in the cemetery sorted out, so they should have many more years to give the fantastic backdrop that they do. Other trees likewise have had our arborist attend to them and are already looking healthier.

The roads in Heckington continue to cause concern. I had several meetings with Highways, and had been putting pressure on the manager to get Godson Avenue repaired.... subsequently, when Cllr Key and I had yet another meeting, it was agreed it would be done and finally it has been. I have accordingly written to record the Council's thanks for this. This does not mean that we will rest on our laurels, and please, if you have concerns about a particular spot, go onto Fix my Street....this is monitored as to its success or not. So it is to our mutual benefit to keep using it.

Speeding is another constant source of complaint. We have the community speed watch team, who are

volunteers and the information they gather is forwarded to the Road Safety Partnership, who in turn forward serious infringements of speed to the Police. Currently, Julie is trying to organise training for some more volunteers for this role. We have a new Evolis permanent speed sign on Sleaford Road, which appears to be working to good effect. There are other speed reduction items that are currently being considered.

We now have 47 bins throughout the village...so there is absolutely no excuse for owners letting their dogs foul on pavements etc.

All this and more from HPC and our precept was only raised by 10p per Band D house this year.

The sports fields have sadly fallen into a poor state of repair, and subsequently, with football and cricket associations saying they are not fit to play their respective games on, my colleague Richard Higgs is working to get a long term plan into operation to bring the land back up to its expected level.

We were approached last year, by St Andrew's Church, to take over the churchyard – this is still being discussed.

We are currently planning the Council's activities to celebrate H M The Queens Platinum Jubilee. We were invited by the Lord Lieutenant to hold our celebrations on the Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June. Subsequently, we are hosting an afternoon tea in the village hall for the over 80's within our village. Church Street will be closed, together with the car parking area on the green. Local charities and businesses have been invited to have a stall for their respective organisations. Charities are free but we have asked businesses for a nominal fee of £5.00, which is being donated to L.I.V.E.S.

There will be a 'Frozen' bouncy castle for the small children and a 'pirate ship' for the slightly older ones. We are currently organising some live musical entertainment too. More info shortly.

We have taken part in the Queen's Green Canopy, a tree planting initiative to commemorate the Jubilee. We have already planted nine trees within the village, and hopefully there will be a few more later on.

This will hopefully be a happy time and bring the village together to celebrate such an auspicious occasion.

We are grateful to our County Councillor, Andrew Key, who has achieved quite a bit on our behalf in a relatively short time. Our District Councillors again try to assist with NK matters.

I cannot end this annual report without thanking people who I work with on a daily basis. Being a Councillor is not just a case of turning up to a meeting now and again. HPC is a very busy organisation. Firstly of course my fellow Councillors. I like to think that we make a reasonably good team. Special thanks go to Richard Higgs, who as my Vice Chairman, has taken over several major projects to allow me time to assist on more mundane issues like admin. Some Councillors have been very active in tree planting and village maintenance...I thank them for this. We are also supported by some members of the public who deserve a 'thank you' for the efforts they put in to help, whereby without them, our costs would rise significantly.

Then of course, there is Andy Ward our caretaker, who does a brilliant job keeping the village tidy, despite some very unpleasant jobs we heap on him. The Cemetery is the jewel in his crown. We get so many compliments about it and it is all down to the pride he takes in maintaining it. Last, but not least, Julie Hudson our Clerk. Who apart from putting up with me on a regular basis (although she assures me I can make a decent coffee!!), keeps us on the straight and narrow. Clerks these days are on the receiving end of constant new legislation and procedures. Julie performs an excellent job in ensuring that we comply.

I see one of my main roles as ensuring our staff are cared for and treated with the dignity and respect that they

deserve. I hope that I have achieved this as they are an extremely important part of the machine that is HPC. So thank you. It has been a privilege to work with you all and I hope that this can continue to help keep Heckington the tremendous place it is to live.

### **3. County Council report – Councillor Mr Andrew Key, Sleaford Rural South**

Unfortunately Councillor Key was unable to attend

### **4. District Council Report – Councillors Mr Stewart Ogden/Mrs Sally Tarry, Heckington Rural Ward**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a brief report regarding the work of North Kesteven District Council over the last year. However, we would like to start by thanking and acknowledging the ongoing work that is being carried out by volunteers, either individually or as part of an organisation, to help and support our communities to recover from the pandemic.

Back in March 2020 at the start of the pandemic NKDC transformed itself into a largely virtual organisation as it worked hard to continue providing essential services. The Council has continued to adapt as regulations have changed with the Council adopting an ongoing agile working programme to maintain service delivery. On 6th May 2021 a change in legislation marked the end of remote council meetings and face to face meetings began again, with the safety of everyone attending being paramount. The Council has continued to support residents and businesses - since the start of the financial support package for businesses in March 2020 the Council has distributed £38,197,458 through 7565 Covid -19 business grant payments supporting 2232 unique businesses.

Despite the ongoing pandemic the roll out of the purple lidded bins for dry clean paper and card in North Kesteven was completed and the first collection of these bins started in September 2021, and so we would like to thank all the residents of Heckington Rural Ward for embracing this change to their way of recycling. In the first four months of the bin collections 1500 tonnes of quality paper and card was recycled. There was also the re-opening of the Hub in May last year after a £1.2m re-modelling and 15 new workshops were completed at Discovery Close, North Hykeham expanding NK's portfolio of business units to 126 at 12 locations District-wide.

Last year also saw the launch of the North Kesteven Community Lottery with the first draw taking place on the 4th December 2021. This raises money for local good causes and it is great to see that some local community organisations have registered and are now raising money in this way.

Also last year, unlike 2020 when the annual Community Champion Awards were held virtually it was possible to hold the 2021 awards in person. The awards celebrated and honoured the best in community endeavour and

included a new category 'Contribution to Climate Action'. Well done to all the nominees from Heckington Rural Ward and please do keep an eye out for when nominations open for the 2022 awards.

The Council continues to look to the future and the NK Plan 2022-2025, which can be downloaded from the Council's website, was approved at full Council on 3rd March. It maps out the Council's vision and ambitions for the District over a rolling 3-year timeframe.

We have only very briefly touched on the past year and so please do let us know if you have any questions.  
Councillor Stewart Ogden and Councillor Mrs Sally Tarry

## 5. Guest Speakers

The following guest speakers gave very informative presentations and provided useful information about the service they provide and how it works –

- i. Beth Kennedy (+2 colleagues) from **Anglian Water** – Beth's presentation included 'ways to save', priority customer assistance, advice about scams, service to assist those on low incomes and other types of help and useful contact details
- ii. Adam Jacobs from **LEBBS (Lincolnshire Emergency Blood Bikes Service)** – Adam's presentation covered the history of LEBBS, the structure of personnel, how it functions as a vital service and what people can do to help
- iii. Matt Tancred from **LIVES (Lincolnshire Integrated Voluntary Emergency Services)** – Matt's presentation covered the history of LIVES, the structure of personnel, how it functions as a vital service at a local level and what people can do to help.

The Chairman thanked the guest speakers for attending and giving very useful and interesting presentations. Subsequently, members of the Public in attendance were able to speak individually to the guests which was mutually beneficial to all parties and very worthwhile.

## 6. Public Participation

No issues or comments were raised

Meeting concluded at 8.38pm – all relevant issues will be taken forward to a future Parish Council meeting

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_