

GREAT CASTERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting

15th. May 2019

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on Wednesday, 15th. May 2019 at Casterton Business & Enterprise College at 7.00pm

Councillors Mark Bush (MB) in the Chair, Alasdair Ryder (AR), John Sylvester (JS) Wanda Allen (WA) Steve Barker (SB) and Derek Patience, Parish Clerk, were present. In addition PC Laurie Appleton attended, together with 2 members of the public: David Clarke and Mrs. Jill Bush.

Acceptance of Office Forms All Councillors, with exception of SB handed in their forms

A19.001 Election of Chairman

Mark Bush indicated his willingness to continue as Chairman, and was duly elected on the proposal of JS, seconded AR, all in favour.

A19.002 Election of Vice Chairman

As in recent years, no Vice Chairman was elected

A19.003 Police Report

LA reported that there had been a total of 9 crimes reported in the parish during the last twelve months, none since last October. These break down as follows: 4 Bilking (fuel from filling station without paying), 2 assaults, 2 thefts, 1 burglary. The bilking offences related to filling stations and had minimal impact on the community, and the burglary offender had been apprehended and charged.

The beat continues to work on thefts from motor vehicles, and there is a possibility of a problem with drug cultivation in the village. This latter is being monitored by the Rutland Force's new drone technology. He is always ready to act on any information from the public in this respect.

MB highlighted the highways issues within the village, and asked for police support on these where appropriate.

Even though there is no active NHW group within the village, LA recommended the beat's NHW app to keep up to date on latest developments in this area.

A19.004 Public Questions and comments

None

A19.005 Declarations of Interest

None

A19.006 Chairman's Report

The Chairman's report is appended to these minutes.

A19.007 Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 23rd. May 2018

These had been approved at the Parish Council Meeting held on 5th. September 2018. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

A19.008 Review and Adoption of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Standing Orders and Code of Conduct: No changes were deemed necessary following last year's revision. They were adopted on the proposal of AR, seconded MM, carried unanimously.

Financial Regulations: Reviewed at the last Annual meeting, with no amendments during the past year, these were adopted again on the proposal of AR seconded MM and carried unanimously

A19.009. Review of Inventory of Assets

The Inventory of Assets has not changed since last year. Total Assets currently £13,592. The Clerk suggested that the IPAQ data reader, valued at £500, should be written off in the coming year, as it no longer works, and has been replaced by a computer program downloading from the laptop

A19.010. Review and confirmation of Insurance Cover for all insured risks

The Clerk reported that we were entering the 2nd year of the 3-year agreement entered into with Zurich Municipal last year. Cover remained at last year's figures (£12m Public Liability, Officials Indemnity £12m, £50k personal Accident), with inflation increases on Office Equipment and Street Furniture. Renewal Premium this year £343.47.

A19.011. Review of the Council's memberships of other bodies

1. Leicestershire and Rutland Parish Councils (Annual Sub £182.28)
2. Rural Community Council – Annual donation £20
3. Council for Preservation of Rural England – Annual donation £20

It was agreed to continue these memberships, on the proposal of JS, seconded MB, all in favour.

A19.012. Finance – Approval of Certificate of exemption, Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement

Copies of these documents were circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting, and the accounts had been subjected to the internal audit procedure by Katherine Ayton. The Clerk outlined the key figures to those present. Changes in the regulations last year allow parishes with expenditure of £25,000 or less to sign a Certificate of Exemption from a Limited Assurance Review, which means that, although that the Annual Return document is sent to the national auditors as before, no call for back up documents is required, and no audit fee is payable.

(a) Certificate of Exemption: The Council agreed to adopt this Certificate, on proposal of AR, seconded JS, all agreed

(b) Annual Governance Statement: approved on the proposal of JS, seconded AR, all in favour.

(c) Annual Statement of Accounts: approved on proposal of JS, seconded AR, all in favour.

The Chairman & Clerk signed all three documents.

A19.013. Review of Parish Council's policy for dealing with the press/media

There had been no change in this policy, which follows the format in para. 26 of Standing Orders. The policy was approved on proposal of MB, seconded AR, all in favour.

A19.014. Review of Parish Council's Risk Assessment & Management

A copy of this document was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. It was agreed that the risk assessments and management thereof were adequate. Changes to the document will be required for the coming year to reflect the risk of data breaches.

A19.015 County Councillors' Reports

In the absence of representatives, there was no report available

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.45pm

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2019

I am required to present a Chairman's Annual Report at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

We have had a busy year and there is no sign that this coming one will be anything different. The Parish Council has a number of ongoing challenges, which we will have to manage for the benefit of this village and its residents.

The Parish Councillors have just been elected to look after the interests of Great Casterton. With the assistance of the County Council we need to ensure that this village remains a good place to live and that the residents can continue to get the services they need. And from time to time we will need to remind the County Council of our own particular requirements.

Let me first look at the main challenges we face.

The B1081 – Old Great North Road is always busy and the amount of traffic going through the village is going up every year. We are lucky to have the three traffic counters to keep us up to date.

However, there are a number of plans, both ongoing and new that will ensure that this trend of increasing traffic will continue upwards unless we can do something about it. And for this we will need the active assistance of the County Council.

The first is the “Safe Routes for School” which was put in a number of years ago to ensure the safety of school children within the village.

At school opening time there is now a considerable back up of traffic through the village from the cross roads to the Crown chicane.

There is an equally bad problem at the cross roads, and another one at the top of Water Lane because it is not wide enough and contributes to the back up at the crossroads. The traffic engineers have looked at all this and we await their deliberations.

The other challenges concern developments. The Parish Council decided last year to keep out of the St George’s debate because we were too far away and because there are two other potential major developments closer to us.

The first is North Stamford, and Quarry Farm in particular – it being in Rutland. This is very close to the village and unless we are careful we could be swamped by traffic going to the northbound A1 and vice versa. There will also be huge problems accessing the southbound A1.

The other is Woolfox, which is much larger. We have already had a meeting with their Agents and have made our concerns known to them. As I said in the Press a few weeks ago we are the “meat in the sandwich” between these two developments.

We have made our concerns known to the County Council and as these schemes progress we will continue to do so. But to date we have had no contact with South Kesteven District Council who is the driver of the North Stamford scheme. That is a concern.

Back to the village I should say that the Parish Council fully supports the development of the Barkers Yard site. But we believe that the building of these

new houses, and in due course presumably more of them will have a further negative effect on the top end of Water lane and thus the crossroads.

Over the past four years, the Council has continued to manage its financial affairs without recourse to any increase in the annual precept, which has remained at £5,000 throughout. Nevertheless, we have, in addition to the annual routine expenditure, been able to fund two new streetlights and installed a defibrillator in the same four year period. At the end of the year we still have adequate funds in reserve to meet any unforeseen contingency

Finally I would like to thank all members of the Parish Council for their work and support over the last year. I particularly mention Michael Markey who has served on the PC since the mid 90's. In turn I would like to welcome Steve Barker to the Parish Council.

I would also like to thank our two County Councillors for their support and advice. It has been much appreciated.

Lastly, the person, who does all the work, Derek Patience. Thank you so much. You have a great knowledge of the ins and outs of the Parish Council and how it should work.

Thank you and lets get to work.