



Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Clerk: Mrs L. Ling
Chairman: Mrs F Bickley

Minutes

**of the Annual Town Meeting of Redenhall with Harleston Town Council
held at the Harleston Leisure Centre, Social Club
at 6.30pm on Wednesday 11th April 2018**

Present: Councillors Frances Bickley (Chairman), Mark Betts, Adrian Brownsea, John Marjoram, Town Clerk: Lynda Ling and Office Administrator Tracey Betts

Also present were: District Councillor Jeremy Savage, District Councillor Brian Riches, Mel Jones (Diss & District CAB), Margaret Griffiths (Harleston Information Plus & Harleston & District Historical Society), Clive Attwood (Harleston and District Business Forum), Carol Wiles (Harleston Future) Graham Reardon (Waveney Foodbank), Fiona Wilson (Harleston Girl Guiding) Ian Carstairs, Mark Bickley, 2 Members of the Public

1. Welcome - Councillor Frances Bickley welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies – County Councillor Martin Wilby, Reverend Nigel Tuffnell, Julie Helsby, Robin Twigge & Norman Hart

3. Minutes of last year's Annual Town Meeting held on Wednesday 12th April 2017 - The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and were signed by Councillor Bickley. Agreement proposed by Councillor John Marjoram and seconded by Councillor Mark Betts

4. To receive a report from the Chairman– Councillor Bickley presented her report (see appendix 1) which highlighted the following:-

- This last year has been yet another extremely busy year within our Council. I was elected Chairman of the council in August 2017, having served as Vice-Chair for the previous 15 months. I am joined here tonight by Lynda Ling, our Town Clerk, Tracey Betts, our Office Administrator, Vice-Chairman Councillor Mark Betts. Unfortunately, our Finance Committee Chairman, Councillor Ian Broughton, is unable to be with us tonight.
- Car Park Lease – Following a consultation with our residents via a Town Poll in September 2017 we resolved to commit to a new 10-year lease with South Norfolk Council to keep our car parks free at the point of use. Harleston being the only town in the whole of South Norfolk that offers free parking to all.

- The Social Room has now been refurbished with many residents, clubs and groups taking full advantage. Extra fitness classes are also being held in this room and the Harleston Town football Club make use of the room as their clubhouse on a Saturday during the season.
- This year sees the 10th Anniversary of the Gym opening with ever expanding membership and a free extended weights area, this facility is now open for over 115 hours a week, a big thank you to all the members of staff involved with the gym.
- As 2018 marks the 100th Anniversary of the end of WW1 we are hoping to embark on a special project to landscape the War memorial area in Broad Street, employing the skills of a local landscaping company.
- Thanks to Councillor Mark Betts for his assistance and support also to all our councillors for their commitment to the Town Council.
- Thank you to the maintenance team and finally our Town Clerk Lynda for going above and beyond in her dedication and commitment to our Town Council with the much appreciated support of Tracey in the office.

5. To receive a report from the Vice-Chairman – The vice-chairman welcomed those to the meeting, and presented his report (**see appendix 2**) which highlighted the following:-

- In June 2017 the tennis courts were resurfaced. This was funded by way of a Neighbourhood Board Grant, section 106 funds and a contribution from Harleston Tennis and Squash Club, a small shortfall was made up by the Town Council.
- As ever, costs of maintaining our assets is ever rising. We have responsibility for our Leisure centre building, running the gym, maintaining our wonderful recreation grounds, the clock tower, allotments, Redenhall Cemetery, 320 street lights, the War Memorial, bus shelters and the management of the Wednesday market.
- We are also responsible for maintaining all the Christmas trees and lights that adorn businesses and the streets throughout the festive period. Thanks must go to our Maintenance Team Steve, Sid and Chris, the Christmas Lights committee and many volunteers, who give up their own time to put up and take down our Christmas decorations.
- The consultation about the refurbishment of the toilet block is well under way and we hope to come to a conclusion soon. We have agreed in principle to take on the lease hold. Once the toilets are refurbished up to a cost of £60k by South Norfolk Council the (new) toilet block will be removed. The toilets once under the control of Harleston Town Council, will be free at point of use.
- I would also like to thank Mr Barry Woods for his many years of service as a councillor and chair. Also to Mr Thomas Howard for his time as a councillor and to Tina Page, our previous Office Administrator.
- In addition, I would like to thank all the individuals and organisations that have helped support the council over the past year and to thank the organisations for turning up tonight to give reports on what they have achieved with the grants from last year.

6. **To receive a report from the Chairman of the Finance Committee** – Councillor Betts (Vice Chairman Finance) presented his report (**see appendix 3**) which highlighted the following:

- This council, as most other councils is facing rising costs such as business rates, water, wage increases, gas, electricity; a major cost to the council, in particular, is the cost of the new 10-year lease and management of both Bullock Fair Close and Broad Street Car Parks in the town centre. Although the East of England Co-operative Society have pledged £30,000 towards these costs, it is still costing our council over £38,000 on top of this generous donation. Unfortunately, all this increased expenditure has affected the necessity to increase the precept this financial year. Although this increase does not actually cover the total difference in between income and expenditure, so some of our reserves will need to be used to cover this difference.
- The council is committed to providing public conveniences, free at point of use, for the public and visitors of our town. As the district council have no legal obligation to provide public conveniences, Harleston Town Council took the stance that we were prepared to take responsibility for them and get South Norfolk to remove the 'failed' new block.
- South Norfolk will provide electric charging points on the car park for the use of all.
- Harleston Town Council manages and pays for the majority of our street lights. The electricity costs alone to run our street lights are over £1400 per month. Currently, the Environment committee are investigating and discussing about a change over to LED lights to hopefully reduce the annual electricity consumption and lower costs.

7. **County Council report** - County Councillor Martin Wilby presented his report – (**see appendix 5**) which highlighted the following

- Campaign to get the whole of the A47 road dualled. called 'Just Dual It!'.
• NCC's Plan Eat Save initiative – an exciting campaign proud to support Love Food Hate Waste in Norfolk
• Four Thousand Norfolk households helped to get composting

8. **District Council report** – District Councillor Jeremy Savage presented a joint report with Cllr Brian Riches – (**see appendix 6**) which highlighted the following:

- 1300 New Homes were delivered in South Norfolk.
- Toilets in Harleston.
- Wymondham £4 million investment in better leisure & fitness facilities.
- £2 million upgrade to sport and leisure in Long Stratton.
- SNC in last 6 of best councils.
- Free Car Parking in Harleston to continue.
- New appointment system in Harleston Surgery
- Preventing homelessness.
- Reduced rates for small businesses
- Policing
- Harleston toilet issue.

9. To receive reports from organisations receiving grant funding over the twelve months

- Harleston's Future - (**see appendix 4**)
- Harleston Information Plus (**see appendix 7**)
- Harleston and District Historical Society (**see appendix 8**)
- Borderhoppa Report (**see appendix 9**)
- Diss and District Citizens Advice Bureau (**see appendix 10**)
- St John's, Harleston & St Mary's, Redenhall (**see appendix 11**)
- Harleston and District Business Forum (**see appendix 12**)
- Waveney Food Bank (**see appendix 13**)
- Harleston Rangers (**see appendix 14**)

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.50pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed:

Date: