

Helpston Parish Council

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on Monday 16th April 2018 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr. J Dobson (Chairman), 28 members of the public including Cllrs R Morton, A Bradley, L Newitt, J Mead, T Thompson, the Clerk S Smith and City Cllr. D Over.

- 001/18-19 **1. Apologies:** Cllrs A Driver, D Dykes and G Jolly
- 002/18-19 **2. Minutes of 3rd April 2017:** Approved and signed
- 003/18-19 **3. Matters Arising as Actions:** None.
- 004/18-19 **4. Chairman's Report:** Councillor Dobson...
- 4.1 He referred to the current progress of the City Council's Draft Local Plan, the housing targets set on Peterborough and their impact on Helpston referring to the local land offered by landowners to City for inclusion in that Plan. He noted that one of the sites was also subject to an ordinary Outline application for 45 houses that was now being determined by City under the current Local Plan and was outside the Village Envelope. Helpston Parish Council will be making verbal representations to the City Planning Committee objecting to this site.
- 4.2 Residents had rejected parking proposals from the City and the Parish Council considers this matter closed.
- 4.3 Interest in land behind the Village Hall had given urgency to the Parish Council's 25 year long interest in this land for a re-sited Hall, car parking and Community Facilities. The Parish Council had completed an Asset of Community Value application on this land.
- 4.4 The Parish Council has also formed a sub-committee to consider establishing Neighbourhood Plan status for the Village with its financial benefits for Community Infrastructure projects.
- 4.5 In closing, the Chairman thanked the Parish Councillors for their attendance to parish duties and the Clerk for his support.
- 005/18-19 **5. Other Reports:**
- 5.1 Cllr Bradley gave the **School Report:** The role stood at 112 with 4 class levels. SATS results had been good and that the Multi-Academy Trust (Wittering, Werrington, Gunthorpe, Helpston) held Charity status. He answered questions about admissions policies and appeals processes.
- 5.2 Tina Humphrey, for the **Speedwatch Group**, outlined the work done by its 18 members. She spoke of the equipment, new developments and future operating methods that might need PC funding support. Further volunteer training is planned.
- 5.3 The Chairman gave details of the **Neighbourhood Plan** concept and the Parish Council's progress. He confirmed that there would be public involvement.
- 006/18-19 **6. Finance and Audit:**
- 6.1 Q4 and Year End balances: The Clerk gave the Q4 results and tabled the end of year balances as £7,081.90 in Current a/c and £9,678.47 in Deposit a/c. He mentioned that, of 25 precepting parishes in the Peterborough area, Helpston's precept was the second largest reduction at -9.2% and the eighteenth lowest of the 25 published.
- 6.2 He reported that last year's audit was clear and unqualified.

007/18-19 **7. Resolutions:**

7.1 Mr Roy Hinchliff gave a pre-amble to his resolution and proposed:

“That Helpston Parish Council should resolve to show its support for an application by residents of Helpston to have the Exeter Arms Public House and its premises listed by Peterborough City Council as an Asset of Community Value by making a statement in support of said application and by adding the Exeter Arms premises to the Helpston Neighbourhood Plan at the earliest opportunity.”

There was a short discussion on the merits and possible outcomes of the application including the viability of the whole project. The Chairman stated that the Parish Council had already given verbal assurances of its support.

The resolution was put to the meeting and voting was: 14 for; 6 against; with 7 abstentions. Motion carried.

Mr Hinchliff then tabled a pre-prepared letter (to be signed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council) to the City Council elaborating on the support from the Parish Council and on the reasons for this support. His expectation was that the Parish Council would immediately adopt and sign-off this letter without further debate.

The Chairman pointed out that this meeting was not a Parish Council meeting and that the resolution just passed could legally only be considered as a “recommendation” from the Parish Meeting to the Parish Council and that the Parish Council would now need to properly debate its own response to the resolution and then consider, if necessary, its own letter to the City Council.

7.2 The proposal by Mr Roy Hinchliff and already included on the agenda: **“That a Parish Poll be conducted in order to determine whether the Parish Council should use its powers to borrow sufficient money to purchase the Exeter Arms public house for the benefit and use of the community of Helpston in perpetuity, the loan to be reimbursed through the Parish Precept”** was withdrawn by the proposer. Due note was taken that the ACV application was not due for determination until 27th April 2018.

The Clerk took the opportunity to demonstrate that a loan of only £250,000 to cover simple purchase of the Exeter Arms, if raised through Council Tax precept on individual homeowners in Helpston, would cost every household in Helpston £500 as a one-off one year precept, or, in the longer term, a doubling of the annual precept to about £50 per annum per household for the next 40 years. No grant income or loan interest outgoings were included in these calculations.

008/18-19 **8. Questions: None**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm