

Draft Minutes of Great Melton's Annual Parish Meeting

Tuesday 9 May 2023 at 7 pm, held at Great Melton Village Hall

Parish Councillors present: Rob Richardson (Chairman), Bruce Fleming (Vice-Chairman), Mary Barnard, Michelle Collins, Peter Markham, Liesl Richardson and Ian Sears. Also present: Luisa Cantera (Parish Clerk) and Margaret Dewsbury (District and County Councillor).

1 Welcome

Rob Richardson, Chairman of the Parish Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

3 Chairman's report on the Council's past year

The Chairman's report follows on pages 3 and 4 of the minutes.

4 Clerk's report from Luisa Cantera on the Council's finances for 2022-23

The Parish Clerk gave a summary of the finances. The Council received a precept of £920, rent on land of £1,766, and other receipts of £1,131. Employment costs were £1,597, administration and expenses of £862, and grants of £442. Overall expenditure was £2,901 (104% spent against budget).

5 District and County Council Report from Margaret Dewsbury

The Council heard reports from Cllr Dewsbury. The District Council report included an update on South Norfolk and Broadland Councils working together, the installation of solar panels at leisure centres to help them become more energy efficient, supporting two new country parks (in Cringleford and Queen's Hills), setting up a bin collection app, and helping residents in need with The Help Hub and cost of living crisis. Great Melton village hall/pavilion received funding to refurbish the building among other projects funded. Fifty percent of council tax income is generated by trading activities, including house building and providing commercial spaces for businesses to expand. The Council is working with others on a solution to Nutrient Neutrality because it has not been possible to grant planning permission for properties in the River Wensum or Broadlands catchment areas since March 2022. This is about to restart because from this April a new mitigation scheme is being offered which allows builders to 'off-set' the impact of their developments by buying credits to fund measures, such as creating reed beds to trap nutrients, that will minimise the impact of the pollution.

Cllr Dewsbury introduced her County Council report by saying that the many services have been very busy over the last year. Trading Standards dealt with outbreaks of avian flu (65 outbreaks identified across the county; there were 3 the previous year). The fire and rescue service had the challenge of dealing with wild fires and flooding. On 24 July 2022, the call centre received 1672 fire calls. As well as field fires, many houses were completely burnt out. Cllr Dewsbury also spoke about the work of the

library service, museums and adult learning with over 600 people attending the bricklaying, carpentry, plastering, plumbing courses at Wensum Lodge. There were also courses for people for whom English is a second language. The County Council has committed to achieve net zero emissions on its estates by 2030 with all street lighting to be converted to LEDs by 2024. There is also a proposal to plant one million trees in five years to help off-set carbon emissions.

6 Questions and comments from electors in the parish

No topics were raised.

7 Any other business

No topics were raised.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45 pm.

DRAFT

Chairman's Report 2022-23

Once again it falls to me to try to summarise our activities and events in the parish in the last 12 months.

Covid 19 still seems to be a presence in society but, luckily, somewhat subdued compared to the last few years.

Some sad news to start: as you all know, Phyllis Curson sadly passed away in December 2022, having only retired as a parish councillor in July 2021. Her dedication and devotion to Great Melton and its church in particular were unmatched and she will be very much missed in our parish.

An annual donation to the church continues, primarily to assist with the maintenance of the churchyard.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that we were awarded last year can be put to good use in funding the new flooring in the village pavilion and surplus funds used to aid in the speed reduction methods and other highways related issues within the parish.

While talking about reducing speed and traffic build-up in our village, a big 'Thank you' must go to Bruce Fleming, Peter Markham and Ian Sears for their relentless efforts in trying to resolve these huge issues ongoing within the village and parish as a whole. As you know, the ongoing alterations and improvements to the A11, A47 and the proposed Norwich Western Link have contributed to these problems in our village but, fingers crossed, we will see something meaningful before too long that will go some way to addressing these issues.

Work has been continuing to refurbish the Great Melton village pavilion so we were unable to hold some of our meetings within the parish this year, moving temporarily to Barford village, which turned out to be cheaper and warmer anyway! The pavilion, despite a few setbacks, is near completion so it is hoped that normal service will resume very soon.

The Equinor Project continues with very little to report on its progress thus far, which is a quite similar picture to the Norfolk Research Triangle spearheaded by George Freeman MP and Richard Bacon MP. (In other words, quite a bit of blow and bluster to begin with but very little since.)

Our annual litter pick was, once again, very successful and very well organised as usual. Thank you to Mary Barnard and another big Thank you to Abby Collins for her excellent art work in designing our posters for the event, as well as to all those parishioners who volunteered on the day; we are, as ever, very grateful for your efforts.

Of course, our 'phantom litter picker' continues to do her daily clear up and collections and we continue to be extremely grateful for her efforts!

Following the celebrations for the Queen's Jubilee last summer followed sadly by her death in September, we celebrated the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and Queen Camilla on Saturday 6th May 2023. Parishioners, the parish councillors and guests enjoyed a celebratory picnic at the pavilion on Sunday 7th May in honour of this momentous occasion. What massive changes for the Royal Family and our country as a whole, not to mention having three prime ministers so far within the same time period.

Once again I'd like to say a very big 'thank you' to the parish councillors for your dedication and efforts in the last year, all for the benefit and safety of those who live within our parish. Also to Margaret Dewsbury, our District and County Councillor, who, as busy as she is, always attends our parish meetings and can almost always field searching questions from our parish councillors - thank you.

Finally, we have to bid 'farewell' to Luisa Cantera, who, for the last three years as clerk to Great Melton Parish Council, has steered us through some sticky and potentially tricky situations in an exemplary and professional manner. Her guidance, patience and counsel have made my job as chairman relatively straightforward and, dare I say, enjoyable for the most part. We will miss you, Luisa, but we wish you well in your future endeavours and goals. Thank you for all that you have done for us over these last three years.

This is also my final year as chairman after many years of carrying out this role, 99% of which has been enjoyable. I wish my successor well and good luck, and try to keep the meetings short!

Rob Richardson
Chairman
Great Melton Parish Council