

Draft Minutes of Great Melton's Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 5 May 2022 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). There were no members of the public present.

1 Welcome

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

2 Apologies for absence

District and County Councillor, Margaret Dewsbury, gave her apologies in advance of the meeting. There were no other apologies for absence.

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

The Chairman's report follows on pages 2 and 3 of the minutes.

4 Clerk's report from Luisa Cantera on the Council's finances for 2021-22

The Parish Clerk gave a summary of the finances. The Council received a precept of £880, rent on land of £1,802, and other receipts of £5,437 (most of which was a Community Infrastructure Levy grant to be used for local projects). Employment costs were £1,947, administration and expenses of £670, and grants of £442. The Council purchased a new noticeboard for £866 (before VAT) making expenditure of £3,924 (107% spent against budget).

5 District and County Council Report from Margaret Dewsbury

The Council received written reports in Cllr Dewsbury's absence. The District Council report included an update on savings made on the merger between South Norfolk and Broadland District Councils, the Help Hub (set up to deal with issues arising from the pandemic and now assisting with accommodation needs for Ukrainian people), and grants available for local projects. The County Council report included updates on adult care, business support, employment, active Norfolk, zero emissions, recycling, highways, trading standards, adult learning and other topics. The County Council tax for 2022-23 increased by 1.99%. The full reports are available from the Clerk.

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 7.28 pm.

Chairman's Report 2021-22

Thankfully, this year seems to have gone relatively normally in comparison to last year, when online meetings were the only way we could meet considering Covid 19 restrictions. As you all know, we are far from rid of this virus and its variations but even with its ongoing problems, life seems to be getting back to some normality.

Firstly, I should like to acknowledge our relatively new parish councillors, Ian Sears who was co-opted in May 2021 and Michelle Collins who was co-opted in September 2021; it's a pleasure to have you both involved with the parish council and we look forward to your continued contributions at our quarterly meetings.

At the same time as welcoming Ian and Michelle, I must mention the contributions and dedication to our council and the village, of Phyllis Curson; Phyllis resigned in July but still remains a presence in our parish, particularly with matters regarding the church. Our grateful thanks go to Phyllis for her unquestioned loyalty, counsel and devotion to the parish during her many years of service.

The parish council continues to make a donation to the church for ongoing maintenance; we were awarded £5,000 in October 2021 as a community infrastructure levy (CIL) payment which will be used wisely, hopefully to make our village roads safer from an ever increasing number of speeding motorists on our narrow and unlit roads. The CIL payment can also be used for other community projects but there are a number of major, local infrastructure projects which, undoubtedly, will have an impact on the traffic through our parish, namely:

- the ongoing problems created by the Anglican Water project
- road improvements to the A47 and Thickthorn roundabout
- the proposed Northern Link road complications and diversions
- the upcoming Equinor project regarding the Dudgeon and Sheringham off-shore wind farm cable route.

Therefore our priority is the safety of residents and visitors to the parish. Continued pressure and presence at online and some face to face meetings regarding these projects from a significant number of our parish councillors is much appreciated; we can only hope that this relentless pressure on those who make the final decisions will eventually pay off.

In May 2021, the parish council appointed a land agent, Mr Tom Corfield of Arnold Keys, to act on our behalf in the Equinor project because the proposed cable route will cut through the Town field within the parish; Tom will guide us through the compensation process as the project continues.

The Norfolk Research Triangle meetings started at the beginning of 2022, set up and chaired by George Freeman MP and with the support of Richard Bacon. These meetings have been attended by parish councillors Liesl Richardson and Bruce Fleming. The aims and objectives of this group are currently being finalised and will be circulated by Mr Freeman shortly but the group, made up of local councils and parish councils, aims to

promote the interests of the local area, local residents and businesses, whilst maintaining the integrity of our environment and its aesthetics. It is hoped that we will identify business, planning, science and research development opportunities within the Norfolk Research Triangle, so watch this space.

It was great to carry out our annual parish litter pick again this year, on March 12th and 13th; our grateful thanks once again to Mary Barnard for ensuring everything went smoothly, to Abby Collins for the poster, and to all those of you who helped out over the weekend. Incidentally, our litter picking cyclist continues to do her daily rounds, clearing what litter she can around all our parish roads. Thank you again to this resident, who wishes to remain anonymous, for her continued efforts.

As you all know, the Queen's Jubilee celebrations will be in June. The cricket club will be marking this occasion with various entertainments over the weekend of June 4th and 5th, to include a beer festival among other things. The purpose is to raise funds for the planned refurbishment and improvements to the pavilion / village hall over the next year or two. This cause was boosted recently when the cricket club won an astounding £50,000 from the Persimmon Homes Building Futures competition, which will obviously go a long way to achieving the final objectives.

Finally, I'd like to say 'thank you' to Luisa Cantera, our parish clerk, for her expertise, patience and professionalism in helping me to chair our meetings and keeping us all on the correct path. We are indebted to you for your guidance in an ever changing world of local, regional and national governance and politics - thank you for all your efforts on our behalf.

Also, 'Thank you' to you as our collective parish council for all your continued efforts, and to Margaret Dewsbury, our District and County Councillor who, as a very busy individual, still always tries to attend our meetings and answer awkward questions fired at her! Thank you for all your efforts on behalf of our parish.

Rob Richardson