

**Minutes of the Hardwick Annual Parish Meeting held on
17 May 2016 at 7.30 pm in the School**

Present: 38 parishioners including Parish Council members; and District Cllr Grenville Chamberlain; Peter McKeown (Planning Consultant, Carter Jonas) and Glyn Motton (Development Manager, Hill); Tony Bowman (St Neots Road development).

In attendance: Mrs A Griffiths (Minutes Secretary, LGS Services)

Cllr Stephen Rose presided.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Roger Worland, Jeff Jones, Martin Cassey, Janie Ward, Ian Storr, Gail Stoehr and Fiona Coulson (Circle Housing). Apologies for late arrival were received from Rev Alison Myers.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting on 19 May 2015

The minutes were approved as a true record and signed by Cllr Rose as Chairman. (Prop GC, 2nd JS)

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Reports:

4.1 The Parish Council (Cllr Stephen Rose, Chairman)¹

Cllr Rose's report is appended in full to these minutes.

Cllr Rose thanked fellow Parish Councillors for their time and commitment, and described some of the recurring areas of the Council's work, such as planning applications, monitoring play areas and attending meetings. Thanks were expressed to: Tony Gill and Pauline Joslin for their continued help and subsequent co-option to the Council during the year; Jim Stewart as Vice-Chairman; District Cllr Grenville Chamberlain; Martin Cassey for leading the Village Plan Group; the Clerk, Gail Stoehr; the Webmaster, Robert Cassey; Peter Cornwell, Howard Baker and the Hardwick Happenings Team; and the volunteers and organisers of clubs and teams in the village.

The report covered:

- the proposed A428 developments, an update on the status of the Local Plan, and the position of the Coalition of Local Councils, of which Hardwick was a member.
- The City Deal and Cambourne to Cambridge improved bus services consultation. Residents were encouraged to respond to the consultation.
- Proposed planning applications for housing developments in Hardwick, at St Neots Road and Grace Crescent, and discussions about how community facilities in the village might be improved. Thanks were expressed to residents for their responses to the survey.
- The Village Plan and the establishment of a steering committee led by Martin Cassey. The support of residents was sought.
- The village website and its development by Robert Cassey as Webmaster, and the complementary role of the Facebook page.
- Hardwick Happenings and its new Editor Peter Cornwell.
- The burnt out building at the St Neots Road/Cambridge Road junction, which will be demolished in due course.
- The Cahills Corner safety improvements to widen the footpath and improve visibility. Many favourable comments had been received. The work had proved to be less costly than anticipated, and the savings would be partly applied towards the new Scout Hut, and partly to set off against expenditure.
- The installation of yellow lines in three locations in the village.
- Support for a play park survey
- The agreement of a three-year maintenance programme for the Recreation Field
- A reduction in the Parish Precept for the year.

Cllr Rose invited Peter McKeown of Carter Jonas and Glyn Motton of Hill to speak about the proposed development for land west of Grace Crescent. A well attended exhibition had been held in June 2015 and comments received had been taken on board. It was hoped that the application would be submitted to SCDC before the end of May for outline permission for up to 98 units, with all matters reserved except for access. The design and access statement and the proposed masterplan had been brought along to show residents. The density of units would be 23 per hectare and there would be a large open space including a play area. There would be a landscaped southern site boundary.

The developers explained that they were in regular contact with the Parish Council and the District Councillor regarding the level of facilities required by the village and how these could be improved. The S106 agreement would secure infrastructure and schemes would benefit the wider village.

The proposals included: a minimum of 39 affordable houses to help meet an acknowledged need; dedicated car parking facilities within the Pastures; village allotments; play equipment in Grace Crescent; a contribution towards upgrading the footpath from the Blue Lion to the Church; covered secure cycle parking on St Neots Road; increased frequency of the Go Whippet service in Cambridge Road; a contribution to a new Community Centre on the Recreation Ground, or if not, the extension of the existing facilities at the Hardwick Sports and Social Club; the relocation of the Community Room to the Recreation Ground, given the need for a pre-school in the village, so that the existing room could be freed for this purpose; a contribution to primary health care; and a connection to the bridleway south of the village. The S106 proposals would not be confirmed until the application had been submitted and the draft S106 agreement would be prepared and discussed at a future date.

The developers reiterated that it would be a sustainable development and would benefit the village.

Tony Bowman, on behalf of the Hardwick Consortium, was invited to speak about the proposals for land off St Neots Road. The proposals were at a very advanced stage and they were in discussion with the SCDC planners. The number of units had been scaled back from 184 and the development would be at least 40% affordable housing, including some catering for special and local needs. Fiona Coulson, who had sent her apologies, was leading negotiations with Circle and there was a joint venture with Hill dealing with the sale of houses and Circle dealing with the social and special needs housing. Sustainability was emphasised. The S106 obligation would include a contribution to a new Community Centre, to education (either an additional class or an upgrade for the school facilities), as well as an extension to the car park at Comberton surgery. It was explained that a health facility was badly needed but the NHS had no funding for new surgeries. An outline planning application would be submitted in the next few weeks.

4.2 Presentation of the last audited accounts²

The report from the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer (appended) covered the audit process, invited inspection of the accounts and offered copies of the accounts for both last year and this year.

4.3 The District Councillor (Cllr Grenville Chamberlain)³

Cllr Chamberlain's report (appended in full) included: thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Parish Council and for the contribution of the voluntary groups to the village; the fire-damaged building, which is now to be demolished, and concerns that the area is left safe and secure; the work of the Village Plan group and the purpose of drawing up a Neighbourhood Plan; the suspension of the Local Development Plan, and the effect on planning applications; the two proposals for development in Hardwick and the opportunity for residents to express their views; and the proposals for a directly elected Mayor for the region.

4.4 The County Councillor

No report available.

4.5 Police⁴

The Police Report (appended in full) gave statistics for incidents and crimes for the last 12 months and the fortnightly Police Contact point at Morrisons where security advice and "Smart Water" for property marking are available.

4.6 Hardwick Sports and Social Club⁵

The report from the Hardwick Sports and Social Club, (appended in full), was read in the Secretary's absence by Cllr Cracknell. The report covered: the background and legal status of the Club, including the lease, licences held, and management committee and sub-committee; the membership, activities, recent improvements and staff changes. The staff aim to provide a warm and welcoming facility for the Club's members.

Cllr Cracknell added that the Club was a not for profit organisation but had made donations to the Pre-school, the Doctors' Run, and Scouts and Guides, and was willing to support village organisations.

4.7 Hardwick Community Association⁶

Anne Jones presented the report of the Community Association (appended in full) which covered the affiliated groups, the meeting times and venue, and the Officers. Suggestions for raising the profile were welcomed. Refurbishment of the Community Room took place during the year to enhance the environment for Pippin's Café, which is now nearly two years old. Local groups were encouraged to use the room.

4.8 Hardwick Happenings

Peter Cornwell reported on the activities of Hardwick Happenings and thanked all the distributors and helpers, particularly Howard Baker for his huge contribution and encouraging involvement. The magazine tried to be innovative and contributions of letters and dialogue were sought. The School was thanked for the two Junior Editors who will be given four pages in the magazine to use at their discretion, with a view to including the Under 11s.

4.9 Webmaster⁷

Robert Cassey reported (report appended in full) on the increased time spent on views of the website, mainly for village facilities, news, parish council reports, and events. A number of features had been added over the year including an online events calendar and a number of other additions to the content are in the pipeline, such as Club pages, online advertisements, a suggestion area and a "What's New" section.

4.10 Village Plan Committee⁸

In the absence of Martin Cassey, his report (appended in full) was read by Betty Grimes. This covered the establishment of a Village Plan steering committee, and a dedicated website supported by Facebook postings; a well-attended public meeting to inform residents of what Village Plans entailed, and community engagement at events. Thanks were expressed for the support and funding received from the Parish Council. A timeline for completion of the plan has been produced. It is hoped to finish the task by December 2017 but this will require more funding. There is some interest in developing a Neighbourhood Plan.

4.11 Hardwick Scouts and Guides⁹

Jane Muncey presented the report of the Hardwick Guides (appended in full). This covered a recruitment evening, the activities enjoyed by the Guides, residential events, participation in community events, fundraising towards the Scout and Guide community building, grant applications and the need for a replacement building for the Guides and Scouts in the future, which would also be available for the rest of the community. The Parish Council was thanked for its support.

4.12 St Mary's Church

On a proposition by the Chairman, this item was deferred until later in the meeting to enable Rev Myers to report on her arrival.

4.13 The Evangelical Church¹⁰

Steve Gaze reported on the activities of Hardwick Evangelical Church (appended in full). He explained that the two churches served in different ways but worked together. This covered services, membership, and small group meetings; collaboration with St Mary's Church and other community groups, including Pippins, Hardwick Youth Club, a monthly service at Gracefields Care Home, the Nativity Scene, Carol singing, the Wednesday Club, WCCYM youth work and helping individuals in the community. A fete will be held on 25 June at Gracefields.

4.14 Play equipment project¹¹

On a proposition by the Chairman, this was deferred to be taken under item 5.

4.15 Hardwick WI¹²

Anne Jones presented the report of the WI (appended in full). This covered the meetings, membership, and highlighted the speakers, trips and events enjoyed during the year. Special occasions included the celebration of the centenary of the National Federation of the WI in 2015, with Anne Jones representing Hardwick at the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace and a Centenary Dinner at Girton College, and the unveiling of the plaque on the village sign. New members are welcome.

4.16 Hardwick Recreation Ground – new 3 year maintenance programme¹³

Chris Fuller reported on the new programme of works to improve the surface of the Recreation Ground, especially the drainage (report appended in full). It was explained that this was necessary because the clay soil traps winter rainfall and the amount of sport played compacts the soil, making the surface soggy. Details of the three year programme and the processes involved were outlined, which it is hoped will improve the condition of the Recreation Ground for all residents.

Stephen Rose commented that for a village the size of Hardwick, the amount of recreation facilities was below the recommended level and there was a shortfall of two football and two Colts' pitches.

4.17 Other

Anne Jones reported on the recent litter pick, when 60 bags of rubbish had been collected by volunteers. It was hoped to set up a volunteer litter pick group covering six areas of the village, as the litter needed to be collected regularly. It was noted that the remit of the litter picker employed by the Parish Council covered only the play areas and did not include the main road, etc. A new website had been set up on hardwicklitterpicking@outlook.com. The initiative was being led by Pat Portlock. The Parish Council had agreed a budget to purchase litter picking equipment.

5. Applications for awards of small grants to projects for improvements to the village

The Chairman introduced a new initiative of small grants to assist village groups, up to a maximum of £250 per project from a budget of £1000. It was explained that whilst the Parish Council could only approve grants formally at one of its meetings, it would like the Annual Parish Meeting to indicate its preference for the projects to be funded and the amount of the grants. Bids were invited.

Clare McGowan on behalf of the Hardwick Play Parks Group reported on the formation of the group of volunteers for fundraising to improve the play parks in the village. Thanks were expressed to Mark Pentney for designing the logo, A grant of £250 was sought towards the cost of putting on a fundraising event. A survey had been undertaken and a plan of action drawn up. The goal was a major redevelopment of the play area, removing all the existing equipment and installing a toddler, junior and infant area, with a trim trail for teens, a willow maze, the total cost of which would be approximately £150,000. Details of an application for charitable status, and proposed fundraising events including a 5k Fun Run on 11 September between Main Street and Long Road, Comberton, were outlined. A Facebook page has been established with a website to follow. Thanks were expressed to the Blue Lion for use of the pub garden to start the race. Grants are being applied for. The Parish Council indicated that it would be open to receiving further applications for funding in the future.

Lucy Gardiner on behalf of the 3rd Hardwick Brownies sought funding of £150 to allow the purchase of materials for fun activities at a planned recruitment evening to boost numbers. The activities enjoyed by the Brownies were outlined, including the badges programme, trips and visits. The amount sought should also cover the costs of another trip. Anne Jones suggested an increased amount of £250 should be granted.

By a show of hands, the majority of those present supported a grant of £250 for the Brownies.
(Prop Anne Jones, 2nd Grenville Chamberlain)

By a show of hands, the majority of those present supported a grant of £250 for the Play Parks Group.
(Prop Jane Humphries, 2nd Steve Gaze)

On a proposition by the Chairman, at 9.10 pm the meeting was adjourned for half an hour for refreshments.

The meeting reconvened at 9.40 pm.

4.12 St Mary's Church¹⁴

Rev Alison Myers presented the report of St Mary's Church (appended in full). This covered seasonal celebrations, rites of passage including weddings, baptisms and funerals, details of services, attendance, trainee vicars and the Sunday Club for children and youth work.

Community activities were open to anyone in the village, such as Christmas and Easter fun mornings, a bonfire evening, and a summer café. Involvement with the School and the community youth club were outlined. Community events included a quiz night, a VE day dance, a fete, Harvest Supper and Ceilidh, as well as fundraising events. The report highlighted the Pippins Café initiative on the first Saturday monthly.

Pastoral visiting included those who are housebound, and Gracefields Care Home.

Details of work undertaken on maintaining and repairing the Church building, and the five-yearly inspection process, were outlined. Thanks were expressed to the Parish Council for financial assistance with insurance cover for the building and for the purchase of a shed and equipment. Thanks were expressed to the churchyard volunteer team and to Mr and Mrs Everitt who kindly donated a children's play house.

The St Mary's Community Hall project had received planning permission for a small hall to replace the portacabin subject to various conditions and detailed plans are being drawn up to enable the work to be put out to tender. Details of the fundraising events held were given. Applications for grant funding are being prepared.

Information on the Church's finances was provided.

6. **Any other Parish Matters including any resolutions**

A resident queried how the Parish Council could ensure that contributions and promises from developers were forthcoming.

Cllr Chamberlain responded that a legally binding S106 agreement would be entered into if planning permission was given, which would commit the developer legally to contribute to agreed projects such as school improvements, a community centre, etc. It was possible for the money to be received in stages. It was observed that there had been instances in the past where S106 agreements had not been tightly drawn up and trigger points had not been sufficiently defined. Cllrs Stewart and Chamberlain undertook to try to ensure that the legal aspects and trigger points were clear. Peter McKeown confirmed that trigger points would be included in the S106. Tony Bowman emphasised that the St Neots Road development was dealing with a Housing Association and Circle worked in many counties and would not run away from obligations. It was stated that Hills was totally committed and the scheme was deliverable in the next 5 years.

A resident asked whether a bond could be sought to cover the risk of a developer going bust. It was stated that this was extremely unlikely but it was possible to ask for assurances.

Concerns were raised that the developments would create more traffic in Cambridge Road and the area around the shop and exiting the junction with Cambridge Road was already difficult and hazardous.

The Chairman acknowledged that traffic was a major issue for the village, which required a long-term solution. The developer said that Hill had looked at the possibility of a mini roundabout or parking area opposite the shop but the Highways authority would not support it. Surveys have been carried out and a transport statement will be submitted. It was reported that the surveys indicated that the additional vehicle movements per hour generated by the development would be minimal and would not be detrimental.

The Chairman reiterated that in the longer term the Parish Council was committed to trying to find solutions to the problem.

A request was made that the users of the school community facilities were properly consulted when the new community facilities were being considered. The Evangelical Church for

example used the space in multiple ways simultaneously and the spaces, storage and multi-purpose facilities provided by the School would be difficult to replicate.

In response the Chairman explained that under the agreement between the County Council and the Trustees of Hardwick Village Hall, the County Council had the right to take over the rooms if provision was needed, but could provide equivalent facilities elsewhere in the village. It was stressed that nothing had yet been decided, approval had not yet been given and it did not mean that the community room would be taken over.

It was pointed out that the funds from the sale of the Village Hall had paid for the stage and the kitchen. It was reiterated that user groups should be consulted. Residents highlighted the intentions of the original contributors and the fact that the car park was paid for by the community.

Cllr Chamberlain explained that for many years the Parish Council had tried to find a solution to the traffic outside the shop. However the County Council would prioritise accident black spots for improvement. Motorists needed to exercise patience as there was no alternative at this time. Previous efforts at drawing up schemes had all been rejected. It was acknowledged that there was no obvious solution and this would be a long-term issue.

The Parish Council was thanked for enabling communication with the village and for listening.

A resident asked whether the Parish Council had any influence on upgrading the A428/M11 junction, to prevent cars blocking Madingley Road.

It was noted that many local parish councils had raised this issue but the access from the A428 to the M11 going south had not been included in the scheme, despite the prospect of thousands of new houses. The Coalition of Parish Councils and the Parish Council would continue to press for action.

7. **Closure of meeting**

Residents were thanked for attending. There was no further business and the meeting was declared closed at 10.12 pm.

Signed _____ (Chairman) _____ (Date)

¹ Parish Council Chairman's report from Cllr Stephen Rose

² Report of the RFO, Gail Stoehr, and audited accounts FY 2015

³ Report of the District Councillor – Cllr Grenville Chamberlain

⁴ Police report

⁵ Report from Hardwick Sports and Social Club – Ms Janie Ward, Secretary

⁶ Report of the Community Association – Anne Jones

⁷ Webmaster report – Robert Cassey

⁸ Village Plan committee – Martin Cassey

⁹ Report of the Guides – Jane Muncey

¹⁰ Report of the Evangelical Church – Steve Gaze

¹¹ Play parks group – Clare McGowan

¹² Report of the WI – Anne Jones

¹³ Report on Recreation Ground 3-year maintenance programme – Chris Fuller

¹⁴ St Mary's Church – Rev Alison Myers