

## **Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021– 7PM (Zoom Meeting)**

Councillors Present: Cllrs R Scott (Chair), P Dickens, P Scott, L Antonini, A Rose, R Capstick & M Versallion (CBC)

Apologies for Absence: Cllr D Coleman

Clerk: C Underhay            Guests: Tom Lawman & Tony Barrow (Highway's England)

### **1: Introduction:**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all invited guests. The Chair will invite questions after each report.

### **2: Approval of the Minutes of the APM held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019:**

The Minutes were signed as a true reflection of the meeting.

### **3: Parish Reports:**

#### **Chairman's Annual Report:**

It's been two years since the last Annual Parish Meeting. In this time, covid has caused the world to change. We are still only allowed to meet virtually. Luckily, during this time, we have appointed a new clerk – Colin who has seamlessly guided us through these changes. Colin has also overseen the building of our new website and Facebook page, claimed many years of VAT, updated our policies and procedures, and archived hundreds of years of paperwork! Since the last meeting, we have had an election which has seen Rachel, Paul, David and myself uncontestedly elected as parish councillors. We have subsequently co-opted Pam and Annie and more recently Lisa as parish councillors and for the first time in many years have a full council. These two years have also seen many other successes and actions by the parish council. To highlight a few of these: -



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- Reduction of the speed limit on the A5 from 40mph to 30mph and continued work with Highways England, Councillor Versallion and MP Andrew Selous with our aim to have the A5 'De-trunked' through the village.
- The implementation of the Speedwatch scheme which will be ready to go once the covid restrictions are lifted.
- Village Garden Services appointed to our grounds maintenance contract and subsequently replaced this month with Goldleaf who I am certain will do a fine job going forward.
- The sale and removal of the containers on the recreation ground.
- The appointment of a new village handyman.
- The improved colour version of the Hockliffe Herald and reduction in cost of printing.
- The replacement of the church gate and repair to existing cemetery gate.
- Funding the volunteer work that has been done by Blooming Hockliffe for the remembrance display and subsequently the flower displays around the village.
- The creation of a new Neighbourhood Plan steering group and commitment to work with them on a new plan for the parish.
- The erection of a Christmas tree despite covid restrictions which was almost an Easter tree by the time the restrictions eased enough for us to remove it safely.
- A covid safe Father Christmas round giving presents to the children of the village proving to be a great success thanks to the dedicated volunteers.

Moving forward, we have just had a tree survey and will look to have works done in our Recreation ground and Churchyard.

## **Hockliffe Lower School:**

No report

## **A5 (Tom Lawman & Tony Barrow):**

Tom Lawman is our main point of contact. Updates are: PowerOn (electric cable under the A5) – the work was paused while it was looked at again – the work will be undertaken outside the "tyre line" and all road markings will be out back as they are now. There is a scheme in place that will look at the A5



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between the Thorn roundabout & the Newton Leys roundabout - this will look at cosmetics, such as pavements and dropped curbs. There is a further de trunking meeting with CBC in June.

Several questions were asked: Cable Laying - The cable laying work will be monitored by inspectors – the rumble strips will go back. Cosmetic work - The pavements will be replaced/repared where necessary. M1 Closures – the A5 cannot be closed as well (thus ensuring vehicles use the advertised route) because there is no legal reason to close it. Speeding – Highways England work with Central Bedfordshire Police regarding this. (Cllr Capstick noted that Speedwatch will re start in early May).

## **Hockliffe Helping Hands (delivered by the Clerk):**

Report for Hockliffe Helping Hands 2020.

108 Jobs in total.

5- Hospital

19- Shopping

53- Prescriptions

8- Befriending (Chats, checking up on vulnerable)

2- Social services, help to social care (speaking with social services about a vulnerable person and helping another vulnerable resident get help)

12- Signposting (finding phone numbers or pointing people in right direction for what they need)

8- GP (not appointments - dropping off samples)

1- Gardening

26 different people have been helped. Some only once, some a few times and some regulars.

All have been extremely grateful and have said what a wonderful service we provide.

We have used a total of 12 volunteers. 5 regulars and 7 new since Covid.

I would personally like to thank all volunteers (old and new) for all their hard work and dedication throughout very difficult and testing times. You are all fabulous.



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One of our new volunteers has now signed up full time and another has expressed an interest and will be filling in the forms shortly.

The last year has been particularly busy compared to other years but as a village everyone has pulled together to help all of our residents, elderly and vulnerable.

THANK YOU all.

Helen Buckingham  
(Co-ordinator Hockliffe Helping Hands)

## **St Nicholas Church Report (Roger Spalding – Churchwarden):**

This report is written with the country still in a form of lockdown because of covid19.

The Covid pandemic has presented St Nicholas Church with both difficulties and opportunities.

As church wardens, one our major responsibilities is the fabric of the church itself. The fabric of the church is inspected every 5 years and The Quinquennial Report is the result.

The Quinquennial Inspection of the Church was carried out in October 2019 by Freeland Rees Roberts Architects.

Mention must be made here of the Stirling work carried out by Bob Walters in liaising with Jerry Lander and beginning the work of seeking sources for financial support to enable the work on the church to be carried out.

The Quinquennial Report lists the repairs to the church and any new facilities that are being considered by the PCC; e.g., Toilet. Kitchen. The following are the repairs to be completed in the next 5 years from the date of the report.

### **North Transept, Floors, Tower, South Porch, Chancel, South Nave:**

The Church needs to find in excess of **£30,000** just to carry out the above repairs. As we are already 2 years into the 5-year term for carrying out the repairs, this matter is becoming very urgent. Figures given are approximate budget costs at today's price levels for building work exclusive of professional fees and VAT and in GBP.



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## **Other Matters:**

Father Noel has charge of 3 churches: St Nicholas, Hockliffe. St. Michaels, Eggington & St Leonards, Heath and Reach.

During lockdown, weekly services have continued with Zoom and as "live service with Zoom" when not in lockdown. Each church takes it in turn to host the Sunday Service. The services have been well received with average numbers, for the three churches combined, above 250 attendees a week. It is likely that this pattern of each church acting as host will continue in the future, with services in church also being streamed via Zoom.

The 3 churches have worked very well together and have established a joint safe guarding group. Various musicians and singers have supported the services and this has culminated in joint sound recordings and videos which were shown at our Easter Sunday Services.

Going forward there are many challenges facing St Nicholas Church, not least the journey towards Net Zero by 2030.

## **Cemetery Report (Clerk):**

There have been 2 interments during the last year as well as 4 plot reservations. The hedge has been cut back to size. Moving forward, a tree survey has been conducted to look at the trees, and we are pending receipt.

## **Neighbourhood Plan (Richard Alexander):**

Very early stages at the moment. Two meetings have been held, and one of these included training. Next step is to look at the previous NP work and then move forward and start to piece things together.

## **Blooming Hockliffe (Mandie Underhay & Alison Alexander):**

We had a slow start due to illness and COVID but that didn't stop us planning ideas first and getting quotes for large planters, soil and sourcing of plants. We managed to buy and had the large planters delivered last year (we then stored them in my garden). Then we only really got started buying plants in February this year. We used a local resident to supply most of the soil. Richard and Colin



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kindly put the planters in place around the traffic lights and on notice boards. We found shopping for the plants were better value at Morrison's and Hunters where we also bought 11 whisky half barrels planters too. Mandie and I planted up the planters and barrels with some help also from Helen Buckingham and Kate Cox in Birches Close. After driving through neighbouring Woburn and seeing their lovely W trough filled with flowers, we asked Richard to put his skills to work to make a H - it looks great. Peter Edwards rejuvenated an old bike- it's lovely and colourful which we have also filled with flower. Some residents have offered to water some planters which will be a big help especially when the summer comes.

We still have bird boxes, wildflowers, and small rose bushes to put out before summer planting begins.

We have big plans moving forward (small steps first, covid allowing).

We will be approaching the school in the hope of joining forces and hopefully starting a gardening club. We hope to show the children how to grow, especially sustainable food. Strawberries and tomatoes in hanging baskets etc. We may be able to help with Christmas and Mother's Day presents etc. We also plan to show the children how to "welly boot plant" and make a Blooming Hockliffe banner.

We off course need to fund raise and hope to incorporate something into the family fun day post covid that we hope to arrange with the PC. It would be great to apply for some of the tree grants that arise at the beginning of the financial year and likewise some of the mentorship schemes that we spoke to Ian Haynes from Leighton Buzzard Council about pre covid, this of course has been postponed after we applied for obvious reasons but we are very keen and this comes with "awards" too if we are lucky. There is of course always Hockliffe in Remembrance and each year this gets bigger and better and this year will be no different in fact we have plans afoot for a permanent memorial and have details for grants that we can apply for with the PC's support, which we are fortunate to have. This may not be in place this year but when it does come, we are sure it will be a lasting and fitting tribute from our generation to give thanks for those that gave their lives.

On a bigger scale we hope to get the village involved in something in the recreation ground/park, quite what this looks like at the moment would need to be discussed as a much bigger group but we do foresee some sort of village



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garden, with "grow your own" areas and bug hotels etc, we will be open to ideas.

Lastly, we hope to get involved in tidying the churchyard up especially weeding some of the older graves, of course in a very gentle and courteous way, we wouldn't want to damage anything and will take advice beforehand.

Lots and lots to do and this I'm sure is not everything but a good finish to one year and plans for the coming one, but let's hope it brightens our beautiful village and makes it an even happier, friendly place to live.

## **Ward Councillor Mark Versallion:**

Solar Farm (Grounds Farm) – Cllr Versallion is keen to facilitate between Hockliffe and Eggington Parish Council the apportion of S106 funds.

Speed limit outside the school – Cllr Versallion will report further when he has more information.

A5 – CBC can only start to think about speed cameras and pinch points when the road is adopted from CBC.

Oxford – Cambridge Road express way – the Government has withdrawn this proposal.

6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – Election for Police Commissioner. The existing Commissioner is standing down – so it will be a new person. Cllr Versallion has spoken to all 3 candidates and covered items for the seven villages he looks after.

The Chair asked whether wind turbines could be added to solar farms, Cllr Versallion responded to say probably not because they have separate planning (for example that have to have a wide space to fall over).

A question was asked about the metal spikes at the end of Whitehorse Close. Cllr Versallion said he would come and look at them.

## **Any Other Business:**

There was no other business. The Chair closed the meeting at 8pm.

Signed as a true copy ..... Rob Scott (Chair) 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Colin Underhay – Clerk – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021