

# Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting on 10th March 2025 at 19:00 at the Methodist Hall, Albert Walk, Holbeach

Those present :

Chair : Cllr P Savory

Officers : Mrs J Hearsey - Clerk/RFO

\* Attended remotely

## 5 Attendance

12 members of the public. 1 member of the press. D Cllr T Sneath

## 1 APOLOGIES

Apologies given by P Howden & T Wiltshire

## 2 MINUTES OF 2024 MEETING

*The Clerk read out the minutes of the 2024 meeting which were **agreed***

## 3 MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk read out the following statement from a Parishioner:

This is being sent by email for the Clerk to read out on my behalf (thank you for this Jan !) and also with enough time to produce the answers to specific questions for the chair to make a statement at that meeting please:

Football Club.

One of my favourite topics is the Football Club situated on the Carters Park property and managed by HPC. As longstanding managers of the charity I continue to ask questions concerning the recompense received from the club. This has been to various committees and seems to just get lost in the council processes and my questions should not be deferred back to the committee or dismissed as a charity matter. I request some action.

1. Football Club.

a. The rent of the ground - It would seem that some rental increases are in place however these do seem less than a commercial level, especially as The Tigers Bar is being operated as a commercial enterprise rather than just a member's social club. It is unfair competition to other businesses in the town. There does not appear to be separate leases for these? (Comparing the rent they pay for the property and what they receive for the Mast! It is embarrassing to see I think!)

b. Closed season use. I understand there is a clause in the lease that allows the council / Charity use of the ground and subletting during that period. When a request was made at the park centenary the club declined use due to chemicals on the pitch. If the club wants to retain use even for ground maintenance during that period they should pay a denial of use charge commensurate with the loss of use.

c. The phone mast : This has and is income currently generating a significant amount of money and is on the Charity property. The football club offered to pay a percentage of this but council minutes shows it was declined with a caveat. The council decided to allow the FC to keep all the money towards the grandstand, rather than accept a figure of £500 and the club would notify HPC of any changes. Well there has been and the stand was constructed. The club did not address this condition and the council has been delinquent. Ironically the HPC minutes records a Councillor Hutchinson ( Isobel ?)" advised that the new lease did not allow subletting therefore ant agreement is with the parish council not the tenant." Isn't it about time the Football club was not subsidized by the council to this degree?

d. Please could the Clerk reveal the dates and results of the last two inspections carried out by the council / charity as Freeholder – as per TOR on Council ( and managed?) property ? The removable fence around part of the pitch in particular has had some construction attached. This construction does not appear to have been permitted and the club is in breach of their lease? Please confirm.

e. Future of the ground. Could the council, on behalf of the Charity review the position of the Football Club and investigate a better way forward for a secure future for the club. Should they be allowed to purchase the land ( with covenants of long term use so the land is not resold for housing). A ball park figure of £1m for the ground would certainly generate an income for the Park charity that would allow one of the most impressive parks in the region for eternity - if not used as a deposit by Cllr Willshire towards build a public swimming pool ! Worth a thought perhaps and yes the deeds allows for parts to be sold?

2. The council regrettably has a reputation for bullying with some dominant councillors. We know the council cannot remove a councillor easily and calls for their resignations has fallen on deaf ears. It has also been made clear that many councillors have resigned due specifically to these members and bullying issues generally. Previous Chairs have called for a line to be drawn under this yet still this continues. It seems to be the” same ole, same ole”. Time for a change please and resign.

3. Chapel and cemetery.

a. There was some interest shown at open days and a further survey was conducted online. Some of the suggestions I felt were perhaps irreverent and I call for the council to ensure that proper respect is given. Has there been progress in funding? If the building cannot be restored economically without leaving generations of debt it must consider seriously the options. I hear the uproar and shock at this, however there may be little choice but to seek demolition irrespective of its listed status!

b. The cemetery has lots of time and effort to keep the grounds in good condition. Well done it is appreciated! Increasingly this becomes more difficult. Would the Council not be better to allow the older parts to age and consider:

“The everyday wildlife of burial grounds means much to those who visit and cherish them but many burial grounds are so rich in wildlife that they should be designated and specially protected Few have the legal protection of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or, in the case of local authority owned cemeteries, Local Nature Reserve.”

I would recommend this to assist overall management of the cemetery.

The Clerk responded that with regard to the Football Club, a meeting was going to be arranged between the Football Club & Carters Park Charity. The matter of the cemetery would be referred to the Council's Open Spaces Committee.

A parishioner queried the banner on the Football Club fence, the Clerk stated this was in hand.

A parishioner said that there was bullying on the Council and said that the two should resign, he said he would call for a no confidence vote but knew it would not go anywhere. A parishioner seconded this comment. A parishioner asked why would they want to be on the Council when they, Isobel & Sophie Hutchinson are disliked to much. Cllr I Hutchinson responded that she will not resign.

A Parishioner asked why the Parish Council wanted a video camera.

Chair of the meeting Cllr P Savory stated that since he had taken over as Chair people had been working more effectively, although not down to him, there has been improvement. The Council needs more people to join.

Cllr I Hutchinson said that a woman had asked her about a crossing outside Holbeach Primary. The Clerk said she would put this on the next PPES agenda.

Cllr S Hutchinson stated that parking near schools was a problem and that the neighbourhood policing team and LCC and local schools were working together.

Cllr S Hutchinson mention about devolution and that she would send out the website link to Full Council.

A parishioner stated that too much Council business was in closed session. The Clerk explained why. Cllr S Hutchinson suggested put a reason why it is confidential. Also explain in newsletter.

#### **4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A parishioner asked if the enforcement officer only worked during the day as she felt some evenings are needed. D Cllr S Hutchinson reported that SHDC contracted this service out and would ask District to look into.

D Cllr T Sneath thanked all Councillors and the Clerk for tgheir hard work.. He asked if there was a speaker at a Council meeting could the public sessiontime be extended.

A parishioner seconded D Cllr Sneath's thanks.

Meeting closed at 19:46