

SCOTTER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14th April 2010

Present : 5 Parish Councillors, Sgt T. Sykes & PCSO T. Burnett of Lincolnshire Police, H. Freeston of Community Lincs, 8 Members of the Public, Mrs M. Brown (Clerk).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors J. Bullivent, D. Capes and S. Rayner, Rev. M. Burson-Thomas, Mrs L. Bywood, Mrs J. Cooper, Mrs B. Cordeaux, Mrs L. Ede, Mr M. Mayall, Mrs D. Scarff and Mrs C. Wilson.

2. WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that items on the agenda are intended to cover topics of interest to the community, as raised by parishioners with the Parish Council. The various parish-based organisations have, as usual, provided reports on their current activities and future aspirations. These will not be formally presented but will be available for attendees to take away in hard copy and will also be accessible via the Council's website and at Scotter library thereafter.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by Councillor Fillingham, seconded by Councillor Brown and agreed, that the draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 8th April 2009 be approved as a true record. The minutes will be signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

4. REPORT BY LINCOLNSHIRE POLICE ON PARISH-RELATED ACTIVITIES

PCSO Burnett introduced herself in her temporary posting as PCSO for the Gainsborough Rural North beat, having taken over from PCSO W. Bonney. She will remain in post until August 2010, working with PCSO W. Thomas.

She explained that there had been an increase in reports of anti-social behaviour in Scotter, particularly in the vicinity of Hobb Lane. Lincolnshire Police is working with the young people and in liaison with Helen Freeston in an attempt to provide diversionary activities. Many of the youngsters come from villages outside of Scotter and the majority are sensible and decent, with a minority "hard-core" that cause the vast majority of the problems. It is the latter group that the police wish to focus their attention on. Considering the reputation that the youngsters have for consuming alcohol on the streets, the police have a policy to confiscate and pour away alcohol found on them and will take home anyone under the age of 16 found with, or under the influence of, alcohol.

There has been few reports of serious crime in the area, although there had been some burglaries in Scotton village. A group from Nottingham were selling door-to-door in the Franklin Road area of Scotter and five people were arrested for trading without the proper licences. The most major event was the recent search for the elderly lady that had gone missing from The Manor residential home. The task force included colleagues from Lincoln and air support was provided by police helicopter. The lady was found unharmed.

PCSO Burnett went on to discuss the organization of the Gainsborough Rural North beat, which is usually made up of a Community Beat Manager (a PC) and two PCSOs. The CBM, Mark Leggott, had been away from work for some considerable time with ill-health and finally retired at the end of March 2010. PC L. Postles, who had covered the post for some months also left to return to her previous duties at the same time. In consequence, the post is now vacant, with the PCSOs receiving support from Sgts Sykes and Dooley when required.

As PCSO Burnett was unable to say when the CBM post would be filled, the Chairman asked Sgt Sykes whether he would wish to comment on the matter. He introduced himself and explained that he had been in the area since November 2009, prior to which he was in Boston and previously policing in South Yorkshire. He explained that no decision could be taken on the process to replace the CBM until (following the completion of a high-level review of the organisation of the Lincolnshire Police force) an appointment had been made at Inspector level. The Gainsborough sector has been amalgamated with the Market Rasen sector, such that there will now be a single Inspector covering both areas. Whether this will have an impact on the future size of beats remains to be seen.

The Chairman asked attendees whether they had any questions for the police team. Mrs Hallam asked what had happened to the people who had been arrested following the theft of lead from the church roof in September 2009. PCSO Burnett did not know but promised to investigate and let the Clerk know for forwarding to Mrs Hallam. Ms Freeston asked whether there would be a police presence in Scotter on the evening of Friday 16th April 2010. PCSO Burnett replied that this would not be the case as the police were conducting a Street Surgery in Scotter on that date between 10am and 12noon at the Eau Community Centre and this would exhaust their resources on that date. The Clerk commented that, whilst extremely useful, the street surgeries were not as well advertised as they could be and asked the police to give her prior notice in future so that she could advertise the event on the parish notice board and on the Council's website. The Chairman commented that, if the surgery dates were organised sufficiently in advance, they could also be advertised in the Eau Valley Advertiser. PCSO Burnett took these comments on board.

Councillor Fillingham asked what response the police got from parents when they took home youngsters under the influence of alcohol. PCSO Burnett replied that the response was mixed. Generally, the parents are very supportive of the PCSOs' actions but there are some that do not seem to care. In such an instance, the police inform Children's Services that there appears to be a lack of care and support from the parents. PCSO Burnett reminded the meeting that it is only a small proportion that take alcohol to excess and she is intent on getting to know the young people well so that she can quickly identify the trouble makers. To this end, she has set up a Scotter Youth website on Face Book to assist in acquiring that knowledge. She also explained that the sole priority of the Gainsborough Rural North beat (that also covers major settlements such as Blyton and Morton) is Scotter's anti-social behaviour problem and that this priority has been agreed to by the other communities via the Community Panel.

As a final point PCSO Burnett explained that she would leave some sheets with contact details for the team and forms for reporting minor incidents at the back of the room for attendees to take home with them

With no other questions being raised, the Chairman thanks Sgt Sykes and PCSO Burnett for their attendance and they left the meeting room at that point.

5. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK (INCLUDING WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE)

The Chairman commented that, with its emphasis on working with young people, the next agenda item was perfectly timed and introduced Helen Freeston, part-time Community Development Worker for Scotter, working for Community Lincs.

Helen thanked the Chairman for the invitation and his introduction and proceeded with a presentation on her role and remit. She explained the background to her appointment – the very large gatherings of youths in the village during 2008 (which resulted in anti-social behaviour and engendered some fear and distrust amongst other members of the community), the resultant set of consultations that took place with residents and young people during 2009 and that culminated with the production of a report and recommendations by Community Lincs, working on behalf of WLDC. It was recognised that professional assistance would be required to facilitate the delivery of the report's recommendations and, with a funding opportunity identified from the Community Safety Partnership and some match funding from WLDC and the Parish Council, she had been appointed as Scotter's Community Development Worker on a part-time basis for a period of one year, of which 4 months have now passed, with the role of building capacity within the community to deliver the actions. She has, as part of the funding, a pot of £5k to spend on activities that will help in the development of the community.

She then briefly ran through the key recommendations of the 2009 report (which had been delivered, via a mail shot, to every home in the parish during 2009).

- The creation of the Cross-Border Working Group – bringing together county, town and parish councils, the police, those responsible for children's services etc. for the settlements of Scotter, Kirton and Messingham (as young people from all of these communities meet together in Scotter) with a view to exchanging information and best practice and to identify opportunities for shared working.
- The development of the Intergenerational Group – Helen's role is to assist it in developing ideas for activities for young people on Fridays and weekends, in developing, training and retaining volunteers who could make contributions to the community and in submitting bids for appropriate funding.

Helen then listed the specific prioritized actions contained within the report that had been discussed at the Intergenerational Group meetings held to date, which include the creation of a drop-in centre on Friday evenings, the development of other youth activities, the development of village inter-generational events (to break down barriers), the provision of shelter and seating and improved communications. Whilst Helen firmly believes that these are the right actions, she is not convinced that the Intergenerational Group is currently made up of the right people to deliver those actions, the current members already heavily involved in other village voluntary activities and with no spare capacity to take on additional work. In consequence, the highest priority action is to engage new volunteers. In terms of the progress that has been made in delivering the specific actions, Helen commented as follows :

- Drop-In Centre – this had been started care of the Grace Church team with some financial support being provided by the Parish Council. However, it had not been possible for it to be opened on a regular basis due to the unavailability of the key person and the extremely small number of volunteers. It was receiving support from Lincolnshire Police and LCC's Children's Services had attended on some evenings. Helen commented that the drop-in was not being promoted as a specific church activity. This was challenged by Dr Birch, who stated that it is very much part of the Grace Church mission. Helen agreed that she and Dr Birch should discuss this matter outside of

the meeting but stressed that the centre would be extremely helpful in establishing good relationships with the young people.

- Other activities for young people – Helen explained that WLDC’s Community Safety team had a range of distraction and diversion activities available for use in parishes and that she is in discussion with them about possibilities for Scotter. A team already up and running in Gainsborough (“Young and Safe”) may also be able to involve Scotter youths in its activities. Helen is looking into the possibility of having a skate park in the village hall car park on agreed dates during the summer holiday period. She has also identified a large number of organisations that might be able to support the community in providing activities, including the Trinity Arts Centre, WLDC’s Arts team, Play Rangers, LCC’s Children’s Services, the Library Service (for activities such as ICT skills sharing between the generations). For delivery and sustainability of any of these activities, the young people themselves need to put in effort and ideas and to provide some volunteers – they must become contributors and not simply consumers.
- Intergenerational events – Helen briefly mentioned the photographic project that had been one of the ideas from the Intergenerational Group. Despite advertising the competition, there had been little or no interest to date.
- Seating and shelter – Helen is working to support Sue Mumby and the team that is trying to deliver the playing fields project to obtain funding for the MUGA. The shelter will be associated with the latter. Plans are already advanced to provide additional seating in the fields.

Helen articulated her vision for the community – active residents of all ages, with many people doing a little for their community rather than a few people doing a lot. She has the funding pot of £5k available to support the development of that vision but she stressed that she can only facilitate the development of the community. She cannot deliver the actions. The need for more volunteers is acute and, to that end, a leaflet drop was to be made during the weekend of 17th/18th April 2010 in a further attempt to draw people out.

The Chairman then invited questions from the floor. Dr Birch commented that, in his capacity as leader of the youth club on Wednesday evenings, he had received a detailed questionnaire from LCC Children’s Services that appeared to cover all of the same ground as the 2009 consultation exercise and that it would, thus, be unreasonable to ask the young people to fill it in. In consequence, he has referred LCC to Helen. Mrs Mumby commented that the request from LCC would not be specific to this project but be as a result of the normal Council process that has to demonstrate that it has engaged with its community.

In terms of ideas for activities for young people, Councillor Billam commented that youngsters of her acquaintance are very keen on involvement in the performing arts. Helen stated that, via Trinity Arts Centre, etc. , that would be something that could be developed. The Chairman commented that he was aware of a young person who may wish to lead on such a development and will assess their interest. With all questions dealt with, the Chairman thanked Helen for her attendance and presentation.

6. INTRODUCTION OF A VILLAGE WEB-SITE

The Chairman invited Councillor Sheardown to lead the discussion on this item. Councillor Sheardown circulated an information sheet and explained that, currently, people do not have ready access to information about all the activities taking part in the parish. It is hoped that a village website will solve this problem and, hopefully, encourage more people to become involved with village life.

The website will be exclusive to Scotter societies and all are being encouraged to join in – a letter has recently been sent to the organisations by the Clerk explaining this. Each organisation will have its own page that will show the information that they wish to include, such as meeting details, aims, membership fees, a diary of events, etc. Each page should include contact details to allow interested people to follow up on an enquiry. If the organisation already has a website, a link to that site can be provided from the web page. The site will also have a link to the parish council's website for maximum ease of finding out what is going on in Scotter.

The website is being constructed by students of North Lindsey College, under the supervision of Dougie Brown (the Clerk's husband) and is being provided free of charge. It should be completed by June 2010. A domain name will be applied for and once this is known, the organisations will be informed accordingly and the website advertised in the Eau Valley Advertiser, on notice boards and on the parish council website. The parish council will pay the fees associated with the domain name and the hosting of the website.

Councillor Sheardown will be the administrator for at least the first year of operation and invited organisations to send him their page content by e-mail to scottervillage@live.co.uk. For those organisations that do not have ready access to a PC, Councillor Sheardown is prepared to accept content in hard copy. Obviously, once the site is up and running, organisations will need to provide details to Councillor Sheardown on a regular basis to ensure that their information is current and relevant.

The Chairman invited questions. Helen Freeston asked if it was the intention to have a calendar function within the website, so that every activity occurring during a specific period could be quickly identified. Councillor Sheardown responded that he was aware of the benefits of having such functionality but was concerned at the amount of work that might be caused for the administrator in populating the calendar. He wishes to put more thought in as to how this could be managed. Dr Birch stated that he thought this was a highly productive and valuable scheme for the community and wished Councillor Sheardown luck in setting it all up, with Mrs Smith agreeing with his view and commenting that the WI is keen to be involved.

7. REVIEW OF THE PARISH PLAN

The Chairman introduced Mrs Mumby in her capacity as Chair of the Parish Plan Committee. Mrs Mumby summarised the overall vision for the playing fields that has been in place since the Parish Plan was initially prepared in 2004 and is now the only item to be completed from that plan. The playing fields element of the project includes the relocation of the tennis courts to land behind the Bowls Club, the conversion of the current tennis court area into a multi-use games area and the development of the remaining fields (including the new field purchased specifically for that purposes) into various sized football pitches, which requires the construction of a bridge and improved drainage. It also includes the upgrading of the facilities at North Moor Park and its pavilion. Despite endless efforts since 2004 in submitting bids for funding for this work, none have been successful to date, funds for major developments being diverted to the 2012 Olympics and Scotter not being regarded as sufficiently "deprived". In consequence, the plan is now to attempt to deliver the project in "bite-sized" pieces.

This coming year, the plan is to deliver the MUGA (together with a safe shelter for the young people), upgrade the Scotter Junior FC facilities, re-position the tennis courts (as they are not now up to standard) and provide additional seating and new steps to the fields. In total, the cost will be c. £300k. To date £20.7k has been received and bids are outstanding worth £97.75k if approved. Bids for a further £50k are currently being written. The writing of the bids is a

complex and time-consuming process and the support of young people is key to obtaining funds for the likes of the MUGA. Mrs Mumby is working closely with the Scotter Youth Forum, which tends to be made up of the young people who are not hanging about the streets on a Friday night but wish to help in the development of their community. She is also liaising with Helen Freeston to ensure the approach is inclusive to all of Scotter's young people, hence the inclusion of a shelter within the MUGA plan.

Whilst it is hoped that the bids that are currently or are to be submitted are successful, there will still be a shortfall, so local fundraising will be necessary. To that end, a flyer is being delivered to every household during the weekend of 17th/18th April 2010 to ask people to contribute and/or support other fundraising activities (e.g. a summer ball being run by SJFC), all of which will be listed in the flyer.

The Chairman invited questions for Mrs Mumby. Councillor Sheardown asked how much money had been raised for the village to date under the Parish Plan and Mrs Mumby responded that the total is c. £0.5m. Mrs Smith extended her grateful appreciation to Mrs Mumby for all the hard work that she has put into the Plan and this was supported by the meeting.

With no more questions being raised, the Chairman thanked Mrs Mumby for her contribution.

7. POINTS FROM ATTENDEES

The Chairman addressed the meeting on a number of points :

- Litter – The local WLDC Street Warden has resigned and, as two other Wardens who had left have not been replaced, the whole district now has only two wardens out of an initial team of five. In consequence, it is almost impossible for Scotter to get any resource from the district council to enforce litter control by the businesses. The Council continues to press for this. We are now on the third attempt to find a suitable person to be the parish litter picker. The most recent advertisement has resulted in only one applicant. However, the application form looks exceedingly good so there is hope that a litter picker will be appointed in the very near future.
- Parsons Field – the parish council arranged for the Village Person to carry out a major clear-up in Parsons Field. Amongst the huge amount of litter collected were 40 empty vodka bottles!
- Rabbit and Mole Hills – the work continues to fill in the ever-arising mole and rabbit holes in the playing fields. Under the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, we currently have the voluntary services of two young men carrying out hole filling and collecting litter in the fields.
- Public Open Spaces – with the completion of the housing developments by Beal Homes (The Granary & Granary Fold) and Stamford Homes (Elizabeth Close area), the Council has negotiated with them to take ownership of the public open spaces on these developments, with the developer to provide the Council with a lump sum towards their longer term maintenance. This will ensure that the spaces remain safe and secure for the long-term benefit of the community. The take-over of the spaces on The Granary and Granary Fold will take place shortly, a final inspection finding some issues that need to be resolved prior to take-over (e.g. repairs to a gate). The Council is awaiting to hear from the solicitors acting for Stamford Homes and all seems to have gone quiet on this front at the current time.

The Chairman then asked for points from the attendees. Mrs Mumby raised the issue of the overflowing manhole near to the fish and chip shop, which she had been asked to mention by one of the nearby residents. The Chairman explained that the sewer in question is a private sewer and that an officer of WLDC is currently in discussions with those residents responsible for it to ensure that they take effective action within a sensible time frame.

With no other business to conduct, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.47pm.

Chairman

Clerk

Dated: