

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
GUNTHORPE PARISH**

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25th MAY 2010 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Cllrs. Lesley Jeffery (Chairperson)
 Mick Bowles
 Tony Everington
 Cam Pearson (A)
 Peter Platten
 Helen Sutton

Also present were the Clerk Gordon Oldham (TC), Cllr Andy Stewart (Nottinghamshire County Council) and 18 members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Cam Pearson and Roger Jackson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Cllr Lesley Jeffery's report may be found at Appendix A

4. FINANCE

TC reported on the Accounts for the Financial Year 2010/11. The Accounts showed a bank balance of £28,500. This includes £2,000 which was being held until this month following the winding up of the Toddlers' Group. The balance is very healthy and allows for both contingencies and for possible capital projects such as improvement of the riverside.

There were no unusual or excessive expenditure items this year and therefore it was agreed there would be no increase in the Precept for the current financial year.

5. OPEN DISCUSSION WITH PUBLIC

The remainder of the meeting was opened to the public with subject headings arranged, where discussed, in normal GPC sequence.

The painting of the river front at Gunthorpe, recently purchased by Parish Council members was displayed – everyone seemed to very pleased with it. Members were asked of its value and, although a formal appraisal hadn't been carried out, it was thought to be worth approximately the purchase price ie £700.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Discussion was held regarding the river front. All were reminded of the long history and 'battles' that had taken place over the years. The land, although once owned by the 'commons', and hence remains common land, now belongs to Marston's Breweries and talks were underway with them on the possibility of its purchase. Members of the 'Riverside Project' (which was set up two years ago by the Parish Council) intends, hopefully, to enlist the help of businesses and residents in carrying out a rejuvenation of the Riverside. This would be made all the easier if the land can be purchased. It was noted that rainwater frequently flows down the slope road embankment into the caravan park. It was suggested that a kerb on the road could alleviate this problem.

Currently there are major issues to be addressed, some of which are felt to be as direct consequence of poor planning decisions. Members of the public highlighted some of these issues: unsightly street lighting, noise and lights from commercial premises, advertising hoardings/banners and various issues regarding the caravan site that has been set up, including the danger of gas bottles close to caravans. At this point a number of points were raised which the Parish Council were unable to fully address as they were in the hands of the District Council. These points are given as follows, together with responses from GPC and/or NSDC:

- Do the caravan site owners have planning permission? No.
- Have the owners applied for planning permission? Yes, but the application is incomplete and they have been asked for further information.
- Have the owners supplied further information? No.
- Is there a license for the caravan site? No – this can only be granted after planning application has been approved.
- Does the caravan site adhere to Health and Safety legislation? Unknown – an inspection will only be made when the site is licensed.

The road works which may have contributed to the accident in which a motorcyclist was seriously injured was discussed. It seems that although the roadworks were authorised in principle, the subcontractors are to be prosecuted for one or more breaches of regulations which led to long queues on the A6097 for two days.

The new bus shelter has been erected on Main Street – there is displeasure in the fact that it is of metal construction rather than wood which would be more in keeping with the rural setting.

A number of dog control signs have been designed and produced – these will be posted at various spots in the village. A member of the public was concerned about the policing of dog controls. Dog Wardens will attend the village if requested and, it is understood, Gunthorpe is on a rota of visits, however all were reminded that the most effective policing is by the public themselves 'Name and Shame'. People are naturally reluctant to report friends and neighbours for their dogs' fouling, but dog mess is very unpleasant and a risk to health (both human and dog) and the effectiveness of the dog wardens is of course limited.

If people wish to report dog fouling, but remain anonymous, they can do so through Nottinghamshire Crimestoppers Tel 0800 555 111. Further details are on their website <http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org/in-your-area/east-midlands/nottinghamshire>.

7. HIGHWAYS & TRAFFIC MATTERS

A number of people expressed frustration at the slow, or lack of, progress on various issues – Parish Council Members agreed wholeheartedly and summarised the issues that have been raised with NCC and the very limited response that had been received.

A mini roundabout or traffic lights at the junction of Main Street and the A6097 – both these possibilities had been dismissed by NCC on the grounds of cost and road safety (GPC have been informed that despite the fact that traffic islands and lights have been installed in hundreds of village locations they, NCC, maintain that there is an increased, not decreased, probability of accidents where they have been installed).

Speeding is still considered to be a major problem. However, the Police state clearly that with limited resources they will generally station covert speed detection measures only at locations where there has been a KSI (Killed or Seriously Injured) accident. The higher profile police presence (with hand-held 'guns') tends to catch a few miscreants before motorists are warned with flashing lights by oncoming drivers!

Unfortunately, it seems that SpeedWatch simply does not work. Volunteers devote time to manning the observation point, report their findings to the police and then (we have been informed) only the most serious cases (very high speed or persistent offenders) will be contacted and even then will simply receive warning letters.

8. PLANNING

Discussion was held on what some judge to be poor decisions by Newark & Sherwood District Council on Planning Applications submitted to them and lack of response and enforcement on developments where no application has been submitted.

The Meeting closed at 8:05pm.

Appendix A – Chairperson’s Report – Cllr Lesley Jeffery