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The Annual Open Meeting of Wistow Parish Council took place on Tuesday, 25th April 2017 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall with Mr Carter in the Chair.

Mr Carter opened the meeting and welcomed three members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs Tavener

1.1 Present: Mr Bucknell, Mr Carter, Mrs Coles (Clerk), Mr Gregory, Mrs Janiak-Emery, Ms Leaton, Mr Leigh, Mr MacInnes, Mr Tew, Mr Waller, Mrs Bance, Mr Twigden and Mr Westbury

2. To approve and sign the minutes of the Annual Open Meeting held on 26th April, 2016

2.1 The Minutes, having been circulated to Councillors and members of the public present, were agreed to be a true record of the meeting and signed.

3. Financial Statement – Mr Carter

Last year, the Precept was held to £11,000. Combined with other sources of income including allotment rents, VAT Recovery, recycling and maintenance contributions from District and County brought total income to £16,174 against a total expenditure for the year of £15,154. The bank balance has been maintained with a healthy contingency of £24,026 but there are costs to cover in the new financial year including approximately £4,500 for the speed sensing signage. For the forthcoming year, the precept has been raised to £11,550 and, with other funding sources; the total income is estimated to be £15,660. The annual routine costs of running the village are have increased and are forecast to be £14,000 but provision must always be made for additional costs, typically streetlamp maintenance/replacement and delivery of projects including Traffic Sensing Signage and playground improvements. The planned total expenditure is estimated to be between £18,600 and £31,000 depending on levels of grant funding obtained for the playground and use of the streetlight replacement contingency fund. Full details of the financial status will be posted on the Parish Council notice board and prior to this may be requested from the Clerk.

4. Chairman's Report – Mr Carter

We have been very fortunate during 2016/17 to welcome two new Parish Councillors although we have sadly said goodbye one of our District Councillors Angie Curtis. Many thanks Angie for all your support. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all their hard work and commitment to this community. On a further positive note, we believe we have identified an excellent candidate to replace our Parish Clerk who has extended her dedicated service for a number of years now to provide continuity.

In addition to the routine activities required to manage the Parish, members of the Council have been involved in a number of additional projects and activities.

Traffic Calming – Coordination of the installation of traffic sensing signs with service organisations has always been a complex issue and this has delayed the project. However, following the identification of new suppliers, the equipment has now been purchased. And installation will begin very soon. The new equipment will have a data capture and download

capability that will enable it to work with the Speedwatch programme to target speeding issues more effectively.

Speedwatch – The Parish Council worked cooperatively with other local councils to share the cost of purchase for its own Speedwatch equipment.

Parish Plan – Members of the Parish Council have prepared a list of project that could be taken forward as part of a Parish Plan. However, a Parish Plan requires community involvement and cannot be undertaken by the Parish Council. We would like to hear from anyone interested in taking this forward.

Village Hall – Village Hall options are once again being actively considered in the light of available funding.

Playground – This year’s safety inspection indicated that some items of playground equipment, in addition to the Zip-Wire, were reaching the end of their natural life. The grant funding being sought to purchase a new Zip-Wire has had to be reassessed to cover a more comprehensive upgrade of the playground.

Training – In view of the number of new Councillors and the increasingly complex nature of their responsibilities, arrangements were made with the Cambridgeshire Association of Parish and Local Councils to host a training programme. We worked cooperatively with other Parishes to share the costs.

5. Playground Report – Mr MacInnes

The equipment is starting to age and we are at risk of items being condemned, Aerial Runway has been dismantled and the slide has been identified as having a limited life span. Quotes have been sourced from a number of Companies and once all the information has been gathered, proper Grant fund sourcing can be started. The Playground is still widely used by a variety of ages from the village and surrounding areas. Basic repairs, as a result of our weekly risk assessment reports, as required by our insurers, are ongoing as are day to day grounds work to keep the area neat tidy and hazard free

6. Highways report – Mr Leigh

Mark McDonald is our District Highways contact. MVAS speed camera has now been approved and budget allocated. This will have BlueTooth download functionality so as a Council we will be able to give ongoing speeding data to the authorities which will assist in our efforts to calm traffic in the village. We are currently site installation dates from District Council. Road repairs continue, all be it at a restricted rate, due to ongoing District funding cuts which is a level of frustration to all involved. Mark McDonald recently accompanied me on a walk around the village and was very helpful in a number of suggestions, however, scheduling road repairs was often hampered by lack of budget. It is of note that the road up to the Toll from the village will have some resurfacing work done this week. The Warboys to Ramsey road which passes through Wistow boundaries continues to be a concern as does the Broughton crossroads and it is felt more needs to be done to highlight the junction here. As always, your feedback and opinions are welcome at any of our meetings. Any specific tasks can be notified to the District Council directly without any direct Parish Council involvement.

7. Speedwatch – Mr MacInnes

We have built up our own team of seven volunteers and co-purchased a Speedwatch kit between ourselves and Bury/Upwood/Wood Walton, at a cost of £600 per Parish. We try to do at least 2 – 4 sessions per month and we also assist other Parishes with training and sessions when they are short of volunteers. The number of offenders is well down as is average offence speed. Once we install our MVAS we can use the information to coordinate our sessions with the times when most speeding offences are recorded.

8. Countryside Report – Mr Gregory

At Christmas I was lucky enough to rescue an abandoned dog running along the side of a road. Since that time I and my family, but mainly me, have had a very good excuse for walking the main public footpaths and bridleways that radiate out from this village. I have seen the fields, hedgerows and paths that surround us change through the winter and into spring and what I shortly hope will be summer. To date other than a broken plank on a bridge leading to Broughton, which has been reported, I have found no serious issues on any of the paths I have walked. The paths are well signed, clearly marked and easy to follow, offering those that choose the opportunity to see the wonderful surrounding countryside that is available. My one bug bear lies not with the footpaths but with those that use them and their reluctance to clear up the waste their dogs leave, particularly when it is right where people walk. I have tasked myself to try to reduce the amount of fouling left on the right of way.

9. Village Hall Report – Mr MacInnes

Attendance at the organised events was down in 2016. The weather played a big part in this for Fun day and Cricket. As a result no fun day is being planned for 2017, and it will be interesting to see if people notice. It is a great shame but it's the same hard core supporters and helpers that turn out each time. Poker night in February was cancelled after initial interest fizzled out. The Planning application is still live for modernising and extending the existing Hall. The Village Hall Committee and the Parish Council will join forces and draft a letter to all residents asking what they want from a village hall and this information will be used going forward. The Plant sale 13th May and Cricket in September are the only outdoor events this year

10. Litter Report – Mr MacInnes

Litter in general and fly tipping is down on past years, HDC has a patrolling team who go round every Tuesday, and check known hot spots, for example Raveley Road. Any flytipping is dealt with quickly. I am sure this patrol has contributed to the reduction in flytipping. The Great British clean up in early March was well attended, and was a great success, it is intended to make it a yearly event in early March.

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11. Any other business from the village.

Mr s Bance asked what we could do about dog fouling. Mr Bucknell would deliver to Mr MacInnes a supply of notices of intent to pursue anyone who does not clear up after their dog. The District Council are prepared to prosecute anyone caught not clearing up after their dog, but intention to prosecute has to be advertised.

12. Close of meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.45pm