

HALVERGATE PARISH ANNUAL OPEN MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Open Meeting held at the Playing Field Pavilion on Thursday 12th May, 2022 at 7.30 pm.

Present:	Charles Reader	Chairman of Parish Council
	Robert More	Vice Chairman of Parish Council
	Jessica Jennings	Clerk to Parish Council
	Tom Carter	Parish Councillor
	Stuart Hannant	Parish Councillor
	Steve James	Parish Councillor

Plus 15 Parishioners

Apologies: Michael Mallett (Parish Councillor), Carol Hannant (Parish Councillor), Grant Nurden (District Councillor), Lana Hemsall (County Councillor)

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Open Meeting held on 5th May 2021 were accepted as a true record (all in favour, none against). The Minutes were therefore signed.

Matters Arising:

None.

Chairman's Report

The Parish Council Chairman, Charles Reader, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for attending.

Mr Reader then thanked the following people for all that they've done for the village:

Parish Councillors	He thanked Steve James who took office in October and has already proved to be invaluable, having brought a great deal of experience and knowledge with him.
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He thanked all the Councillors for their support and contributions over the last year. He wished Carol a speedy recovery and thanked her for her contributions. He said how Michael has been through a very difficult time and will be joining the Parish Council for meetings again as soon as he can.

Peter & Sharon Fellowes	for their continued efforts in running the Phone Box at Tunstall with the Book Swap and Information Noticeboard, as well as general care and maintenance.
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Peter Hardy	for carrying out various maintenance work, in Tunstall.
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Townlands Trust	for its continued support of good causes in the community. He explained that the Trust was set up about 200 years ago and money from rental of the marsh land that it owns, would go towards the Parish's Poor. This has evolved into what the
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Trust is today whereby they donate the rent money to good causes.

- Parochial Church Council thanks to Nick Butcher and Sally More, as Church Wardens, and to Pam Butcher, as Treasurer, and to Martin Greenwood, the vicar. He pointed out how difficult it is to run a Grade I listed building on very limited funds.
- The Red Lion they have worked very hard and are getting more attendance with music nights, open mic nights and quiz nights. We should all support what is now one of only a few 'wet' pubs left in the area.
- Playing Field Committee The Playing Field continues to be a major asset to the village who organise and hold village events. Thank you to all those involved and responsible.
- Village Hall Committee this is currently in abeyance due to ill health and, sadly, death for many who were on the committee. The Parish Council will be looking at the issue of the Village Hall to discuss what will be done with it.
- John Collins & Sean McKnight they have taken over the SAM2 work and move it around the various locations. The village now has 2 SAM2's.
- Brian Iles he has always been a very good fighter for the community, working hard and with dedication. He will be greatly missed.
- Grant Nurden for his dedication to his work and his knowledge about any issues that affect the Parish. We are very grateful to have him.

There is an ongoing problem with dog fouling in the village, which the Parish Council recently leafleted the village about. The Parish Council is taking it very seriously, including from a health point of view, as the virus in it can cause blindness. It is so important to clear up after your dog both from a hygienic point of view and out of respect for all who live in the village.

The Parish Council is looking at the possibility of producing a Neighbourhood Plan and a Housing Needs Survey will be carried out by Saffron Housing. There will be a village-wide consultation about housing. The Neighbourhood Plan differs from the Parish Plan, which Halvergate already has, in that it deals purely with planning.

Wickhampton Road, Branch Road and Tunstall Road (to Sandhole Corner) are all on the Parish Council's general agenda. The Parish Council are still trying to persuade Highways to address the issue of encroachment of soil and vegetation on the Wickhampton Road and make it safer for pedestrians. Likewise, it is looking into the possibility of getting a footpath from Oaklands Close to Sandhole Corner. Branch Road is very uneven and has damaged shock absorbers on vehicles. The Parish Council will continue to raise it with Highways and also hopes that Lana Hempsall, our Norfolk County Councillor, will take up to the baton. It is also planned to write to Jerome Mayhew, MP to ask for his support and influence.

The Village has had to say a sad goodbye to 4 parishioners who have died and will be greatly missed. They are, Tony Baxter, who was a tower of strength, Rene Willimot, who was a pillar of the Village Hall, Lorraine Mallett, who was also involved in the Village Hall and served the community faithfully for many years, and also Don Edwards, who was a pillar of the Church and other institutions.

The Parish Council have put in a planning application for an Airmen's Memorial to commemorate the 17 men who died in 3 plane crashes that came down on the marshes. We are currently waiting to hear if approval has been given or not but would like to get it erected this Summer if possible. There is likely to be a delay in getting the granite, which is what the memorial will be made from, over as it is in short supply at the moment.

Two parishioners, George and Joshual Kholer, father and son, are currently on a sponsored bike ride across the USA to raise money for "Biking for Battle Back" which helps rehabilitate injured soldiers.

Robert More thanked Charles Reader for his work as Chairman over the last year.

Financial Report

The Parish Clerk, Jessica Jennings, read out the Financial Report for the tax year 2020/2021. Summary below:

Balance Brought Forward:	£13,673.80
Income:	£10,424.93
Expenditure:	£ 7,855.12
Balance Carried Forward:	£16,243.61
Adjustments	(£1,609.45)
	(£ 60.00)
	(£ 150.00)
	£ 325.76)
Projected Balance:	£14,749.92

Mr Grant Nurden – District Councillor Report (read by Chairman)

- Since the lifting of Covid restrictions, meetings have returned to being held in-person.
- The Council has been awarded the armed forces Gold Standard, work has started on site at the Broadland Food Innovation Centre, and houses have started being built at St Giles Park.
- The staff at BDC have continued to play their part in looking after the community and businesses and since the start of the Pandemic, has paid out £104 million to businesses across Broadland and South Norfolk.
- BDC and SNC continue their collaborative journey. A joint website has been launched and systems are being aligned, such as using 'Teams'. The accommodation review is being worked on which should see both councils on one site.
- The waste contract has gone to Veolia again who are expected to maintain a good quality service.
- The Integrated Care System (ICS) model ensures the work done at District level is at the front of how the community is supported.
- The new business plan has been signed off and the 2022/23 budget was approved with a 0% increase in Broadland DC's share of the annual Council Tax bill.
- There is still a lot to do in the future, with the Levelling Up White Paper, Planning Reform, Implementation of the Environmental Bill and Local Government Finance Review.

- The collaboration between the two councils is under review by an external Local Government Association Peer Review panel to help ensure best value and quality services for residents are delivered but whilst maintaining the independency of the Council. The collaboration, importantly, is reducing individual and collective revenue requirements from year to year.

Mrs Lana Hemsall – County Councillor Report (read by Chairman)

- Apologised for not having been at many previous meetings but she will be much more in attendance at future ones.
- Covid restrictions have made visiting parishes difficult.
- Work at NCC continued, despite Covid, in as normal as way as possible.
- Funding that was made available to help with the impacts of Covid has now been withdrawn as restrictions have been lifted. This has resulted in some surplus staff being let go.
- NCC opted for an increase in their share of the Council Tax bill but below the level that would have required a Referendum to be held.
- The cost of living has increased dramatically, with fuel, energy and food prices all being affected.
- Lana is very interested in Sustainable Transport and has recommended Halvergate PC for 2 charging points from her allotted funding pot. However, there would be some ongoing costs associated with this which would have to be met by the PC so she considered that it would be better to first see how larger Parish Councils coped before putting them in smaller parishes. Reedham and Acle will both be getting some and will act as 'test' sites.
- Lana is aware that rural parishes can get left behind and it is these rural parishes that she would like to help with her funding pot.
- Lana would welcome any suggestions or issues that people may have. All her contact details are on the Norfolk County Council website.

Playing Field Report

Jason Brister, Chairman of the Playing Field Association, presented the report for the Playing Field.

- The last year has been another productive year which, despite Covid restrictions, was ended in a sound financial position with a profit of £1,440.69.
- Expenditure included £2,872 on a new ride-on mower and £734.80 on pitch maintenance.
- The coming year is expected to be difficult as the increased cost of living is absorbed in the form of rising utility bills. Ann Barrett, Treasurer, has managed to get a competitive two year fixed rate deal on electricity which will help enormously.
- Fundraising is more important than ever in order to make the books balance.
- Fundraising was impacted heavily last year due to Covid and its restrictions, which meant the Christmas Extravaganza couldn't be held for the second year running which is a major source of funds.
- Halvergate and Acle Cricket Clubs have amalgamated for the 3rd and 4th teams. This has ensured that cricket continues to be played at the playing field on Saturdays from May to September.
- Junior cricket training takes place on Friday nights, with the All Stars and Dynamos proving very popular for families.
- Children from 5+ years are coached under qualified supervision while parents can use the Clubhouse facilities. There is also a BBQ which adds to the fun.

- The Darts Team has gone from strength to strength and now has a 'B' team. Darts takes place on Tuesday evenings during the Winter.
- On Friday 3rd June, the Playing Field will be hosting the Platinum Jubilee celebrations for the village and would like to thank the Parish Council and Halvergate Townlands Trust for their financial assistance with this event.
- Jubilee Celebrations will include live music, a childrens' tea party with disco and entertainment. A huge celebration cake will be shared and a licensed bar and hot food vendor will be available. Please come along and support this village event.
- The Clubroom is always available for hire for private functions and village activities and is always value for money.
- All the work done at the Playing Field is done on a voluntary basis and no wages are paid. The work undertaken at the Playing Field is a huge commitment done by a few people. We are always grateful for volunteers to come forward to help in anyway, such as offering just an hour or two a week, to weed, tidy or carry out general maintenance. This would help us so much.
- The rewards of volunteering speak for themselves. Please speak to any of the Committee if you can help.
- We look forward to another successful year.

Nick Butcher – Church Report

- The church was closed for the majority of the Lockdown but is now back to being open as it was before.
- There are three services a month, with one vicar serving the 6 parishes in the Benefice.
- The financial side of things are a real struggle. The Diocese sets a figure of the cost of running the Benefice which has to be met by the parishes. Halvergate has an average of 10 or fewer in its congregation yet has to find £8,000 per year. This is very hard to do and capital reserves have had to be used.
- The church is open daily from 10.00 to 4.00.
- There is a wide ranging book library where people are welcome to buy books for 50p / £1 each.

Parishioners Forum

Charles Reader opened the meeting to Parishioners for their comments:

Robert More said that at last year's meeting, the idea of a Youth Club had been brought up by Lucy Houghton and that she had further suggestions about how it could happen.

Lucy put forward the following ideas:

- She feels strongly that a Youth Club is needed in the village and is prepared to run it with the help of others.
- A location is needed and she wondered if the Playing Field would be a good place.
- The village youth should be involved and asked what they would like to do at a Youth Club and suggested a flyer be sent round the village.
- She proposed Thursdays, 6.30 – 8.30, with activities that could include games and sports, table tennis etc.
- It should be a safe space to have fun.
- There could be a Homework Club, Book Club, Book borrowing etc.
- She would like for free fruit and veg to be available (could approach Co-op or Acle Food Bank). Also, for a Clothes Bank to be held every few months, where people

can donate clothes and also take clothes that they need. There are struggling families in the area for who this could be very beneficial.

- Fun activities such as music / open mic nights, Art area, crochet and knitting, sewing on a sewing machine. Also, cooking and baking. Competitions.
- Have people to talk to the children, such as farmers or the fire brigade etc.
- There would be rules in place, including a Code of Conduct and every child would have to be responsible for their own behaviour.
- The suggested age range is from Year 6 to Year 10.
- Device free – the focus instead being on activities.
- The children would set it up and clear it all away each time – all helping to teach them responsibility and team work.

Feedback given to Lucy:

- Survey Monkey was suggested as a way of getting responses to any flyers circulated round the village, as it was felt that children today are more digital focused than paper focused. Alternatively, providing an email address that they could send their ideas to.
- The Playing Field said that they would need to discuss it as a Committee first and then talk to Lucy afterwards.
- Lucy added that the flyer should include a call for help from adults and that if none was forthcoming, then the whole idea was a non starter.

Billy Frosdick mentioned the amount of dog mess on Tunstall Road. Charles Reader responded that the Parish Council is taking steps to address this.

Billy also asked if the SAM2 could also be placed on Tunstall Road, as a lot of speeding occurs on that road. Parish Clerk to contact Highways.

Charles Reader said how the Airmen's Memorial will be carefully placed and won't detract from the existing War Memorial.

As there were no further comments or questions, Charles Reader thanked everybody for attending and closed the meeting at 8.30 pm.

Signed: _____ Charles Reader, Chairman

Signed: _____ Jessica Jennings, Clerk to Parish Council