



Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 23 May 2016

Please note that these are draft minutes until approved at the next Annual Parish Meeting

In the chair: Councillor Heselwood

Present: 14 members of the public, Councillors Keys, Heselwood, Stuchfield, Laver, and Brown, Parish Clerk, Rachel Storer (Victoria Atkins' MP Constituency Manager) and Councillor W. Gray of East Lindsey District Council.

1. Apologies for absence:

Councillor Padfield due to work commitments, Councillor Bell due to ill-health and 4 residents.

2. Minutes: It was agreed by all that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 12 May 2015 were a true record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

3. Question & Answer Session by Ms Rachel Storer, Constituency Manager for Victoria Atkins, MP:

Ms Storer advised that Mrs Atkins has a constituency office in the Fortuna Business Centre in Horncastle and supplied the contact details.

BROADBAND

Mrs Atkins is aware that lack of broadband service is a major issue in the area and she is therefore planning a broadband summit which residents and Councillors can attend. Ms Storer advised that she would take any residents' questions back to Mrs Atkins for a response.

1 resident wanted clarification on why BT had enabled the cabinet at Wispington crossroads, which only serves about 5 or 6 houses in Silver Street, before the distance from the cabinet slows the speed right down, leaving the vast majority of Minting and Gautby with very low speed, whereas Wispington, with approximately 6 properties, now has fast broadband. In addition, Minting does not appear to be in phase 2 of the broadband rollout scheme. This appeared to be a very large waste of money and that through Council tax and bills, BT are being paid 3 times to carry out work which they have not done.

Another resident was told by BT that the BT Infinity service was available, only for them to admit later that their property was too far from the cabinet.

Ms Storer advised that there are now other technologies available, beyond the line-of-site service which is currently available to a few properties locally. **She confirmed that line-of-site is definitely not needed anymore, and she will get back to the parish council with further updates on the new technology.**

Councillor Heselwood advised that AB internet want to contact the Vicar of St Andrew's in Minting, to discuss the possibility of bouncing a signal off the steeple there. She also advised that mobile broadband may be an option for some residents as the signal is improving in the area, up to about 15 mG currently, however there is usually a download limit. She also raised the point that there are an increasing number of services which can only be accessed online; but with many residents without computers, libraries

closing and no bus service except Call Connect, people are becoming more and more isolated and communities like Stainfield are not even covered by the Call Connect bus service.

Another resident, running a business and needing internet connection advised that he has had 24 callouts to BT engineers over the last 2 years, meaning taking 24 days off work and to no avail. He has now had a new line run from Silver Street to his property but the broadband is no faster, partly due to aluminium cabling in Silver Street. Much of the problem is that everyone you speak to in BT gives you a different answer. He is now also using a mobile broadband service from EE, costing £40 + VAT per month, for 35Mbps, but the mobile signal still drops out.

Ms Storer advised that if something can be done to improve things, Victoria Atkins will do so and she will issue invitations to the broadband summit, planned for July. Mrs Heselwood stated that the parish council were led to believe that if it could prove high interest in fast broadband, the village would be put on the list for connection; every household was approached by the council and there was over 85% support, but this has made no difference and she felt that BT, 3 mobile and EE should be invited to the summit.

FRACKING

On other matters, Councillor Keys asked for Mrs Atkins' stance on Fracking; Ms Storer advised that she would have to write to Councillor Keys and asked him to supply contact details. Councillor Heselwood advised that our area has been designated for fracking tests, even though it is an earthquake zone and there was a bad earthquake a few years ago and water is supplied from aquifers via boreholes. The council feel it is a frightening prospect and have a policy of objecting to fracking. The parish clerk advised that the parish council is a consultee in the process and that although there is a licence to frack in the area, no-one has applied to do so yet. If they do, the council will be involved in the process. Ms Storer advised that she will ask Mrs Atkins to write to the parish council on the matter.

TREES/HEDGES/HIGHWAYS

A resident raised the matter of cutting trees along the roadside, advising that those along the Gautby Road have been recently flailed rather than pruned and this will have damaged them. He is unsure as to the owners of these trees.

Another resident advised that the Minting sign at the top of Silver Street has disappeared and other signs are covered by tree and hedge growth. The parish clerk advised that the missing Minting sign has been reported and that the parish council or Highways can write to landowners where vegetation is overgrowing. Councillor Heselwood confirmed that there are a number of highways issues that need to be resolved, like the number of potholes, and she doesn't understand why they have recently top-dressed Bricken Field Lane and left other worse problem areas untouched. A resident asked what Mrs Atkins will be doing regarding highways. Ms Storer advised that this is a county council matter, but that she has secured extra funding for buses. A Gautby resident showed photographs of a large pothole in Gautby which needs to be repaired. Parish Clerk confirmed she would report this as a fault. Councillor Keys advised that an activity such as fracking would require large plant and machinery to be moved around and the condition of the roads locally makes this unacceptable. Councillor Heselwood advised that the council had enquired about the provision of extra passing places or laybys around Gautby, but the county council advised there was no money available for this and confirmed that Councillor Hoyes is the local county councillor for the area.

FLOOD FORUM

Rachel Storer enquired as to what Councillors thought of the recent flood forum held by Victoria Atkins. Councillors felt that there was some confusion as to which agency is responsible for what in terms of flood water and it was suggested that the partnership aspect of working was not functional and this should be followed up by Victoria Atkins. It would also be useful to have a layman's guide to who does what regarding water and that perhaps the county council, which, since the 2007 flooding, has lead

responsibility, could produce a document. Councillor Heselwood also spoke to a representative of Witham 3rd Internal Drainage Board at the forum, regarding the bottleneck at Minting, where run-off from Priory Field meets Minting Beck and then goes through 2 bridges/culverts of different capacities and causes flooding. Apparently, it has been agreed that work needs to be undertaken, to improve the situation but, as yet, no money has been identified to pay for it.

STREET LIGHTING

Councillor Heselwood asked for any other comments on this following the parish council's recent parish-wide survey. There were no further comments. Councillor Keys wanted to know what will happen next. Councillor Heselwood advised that the parish council will make the formal decision as to whether to turn off the Minting lights at the next meeting. However, only 2 people had stated there were in favour of keeping the lights, the vast majority were against. She further advised that solar PIR lights can be purchased for £12.50, which do not use electricity and can easily be fitted outside a house for anyone who is concerned about having some light outside.

4. **Annual Report from the Parish Council Chair:**

Once again, 2015/16 has been a very busy year for both the Parish Council and the villages. It's been wonderful to see the setting up of Minting Community Choir which started in October and has already performed several times and has a regular membership of around 25 from our local area. I understand that the success of this group has also led to the very recent setting up of Minting Amateur Dramatics Group.

The Venue at Minting project brought several acts to local audiences, including the very popular Rural Touring comedy "Instructions to US Servicemen in Britain" and the excellent Baritone and Tenor dinner and concert as well as the "Acapella in Minting" concert. The Heritage Society and Minting Village Hall plan to continue the Venue at Minting project and hope to announce 2 more rural touring shows for later in the year.

Last year saw our villages' receive our highest ever scores from the Best Kept Village judges and this year's judging will start shortly.

Since last year, Minting and Gautby villages' facebook has increased its Friends from 28 to 88 and is regularly used for advertising local events and sharing interesting and thought-provoking information.

Government austerity measures have resulted in rising costs to our village halls with the receipt of the first ever rates demand "completely out of the blue" - £500 for Minting Village Hall and £70 for Gautby. This, combined with reduced grant funding from local councils has increased the financial pressure on village halls. So, it is good to hear that the 2 village hall committees in Gautby and Minting have joined forces to host a Minting and Gautby Summer Fete on Saturday, July 9th, 2016 which as far as we know, will be the first combined villages fete and we hope you will be able to attend.

As far as the Parish Council is concerned, our successful defibrillator campaign resulted in the installation of 2 units, one on Gautby Village Hall and one in the centre of Minting, as well as a well-attended CPR training session run by East Midlands Ambulance Service. The provision of the defibrillators forms part of the Parish Council's Emergency Plan, to which was added 2 sand-filled bins in the centres of both Minting and Gautby, for the quick filling of sandbags in case of flooding (for which the council would like to thank residents Mr Eric Clark and Mr Matt Sharpe for supplying the sand); together with the large dual-fuel cooker now installed at Minting Village Hall which will serve as an emergency refuge. Water levels in Minting beck are being monitored during heavy rainfall with a view to providing early warning in case of flooding. (Flood Alerts are displayed on the villages' website.) It has been identified by Witham 3rd drainage board that there is a bottleneck where Grundy's Lane meets Church Lane and we are pushing to see if funding can be found to relieve this.

Parish Councils were advised that East Lindsey District Council were reviewing their street lighting policy and the parish council is in the process of seeking residents' views.

Recent announcements by the government seem to indicate that previous aspirations for broadband provision in rural areas were over-ambitious and that we understand currently the ambition is to provide most households with 10 Mbps by 2020, by which time this speed will be insufficient. There are community broadband groups already providing 1000 Mbps. Although we have helped some properties through AB Internet, and a very few are able to benefit from BT fibre-optic cables at Wispington crossroads, the majority of households are not able to receive even 1 Mbps, let alone superfast broadband, which is defined as 24 Mbps. This is an area which the parish council continues to work on.

As usual last year, we kept up the pressure regarding potholes, ensured the village centres, plinth island and Playing field were mowed regularly, responded to planning applications and various local government consultations and moved the Emergency Plan forward.

Thank you as ever to our wonderful team of councillors, without whom we couldn't accomplish as much as we do.

5. **Reports from Local Organisations/Clubs:**

a) Minting and District Gardening Club: Mrs A Clark (Chair of the Gardening Club) advised the meeting that the Gardening Club meets in Minting Village Hall on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm, except in July and August and that everyone is welcome to attend. It is not a large group, but recently there have been new members. Most members are from Minting, Gautby and Wispington, but some from other villages such as Stixwold, Stainfield, Ludford, Wragby and Horsington. On Saturday 4th June a coffee morning and plant sale will be held, 10-12pm to raise funds for the group. There will be lovely homemade cakes and plants for sale, everyone is welcome. The annual subscription for the gardening club is £5 per household per year, with £1 charge for meetings and any new members would be very welcome.

b) Report from St Andrew's Church, Minting: Mrs M Whittaker was unable to attend, but sent a report, outlining the activities of St Andrew's church over the past year. It was a fairly quiet year, with monthly Holy Communion services. In May, we opened St Andrew's for the Open Churches weekend for the first time in several years, the success of which we have been able to build upon in the current year. In September, there was a joint ashes burial for the late Mr & Mrs Toyne. Our organist, David Allsop, formed our well-supported Community Choir which often rehearses in St Andrew's on a Friday evening. Our Harvest Thanksgiving in October was well attended as was a fifth Sunday group Holy Communion in November. The Christmas Eve Carol Service was again a great success enhanced by the addition of the Community Choir. One fairly major expense, arranged by Rev. David Bartlett was the removal of the dead (and becoming rather dangerous) horse chestnut tree by the church gate. Several donations from the Gateshead Metal Detecting Society kindly passed on by Mr & Mrs E. Clark softened the blow. As always, our thanks go out to all who have helped in so many ways, both inside and outside the church. We have been unable to pay our parish share and still have no DCC. A copy of the 2015 audited accounts were provided.

c) Report from Minting Village Hall:

The Hall has continued to host a mixture of both regular bookings, such as Zumba sessions and Gardening Club meetings and one-off events, such as birthday parties, anniversaries and a wedding. In addition, organisations such as the Lincs Gardens Trust, Lincolnshire Shire Horse Society, the Parish Council, Witham 3rd Internal Drainage Board and the local Young Farmers used the hall for meetings, parties and quiz nights. We are pleased that the monthly village coffee morning has re-started, and there is now a weekly Yoga class on Thursday mornings. The committee remain very interested in hearing from anyone who would like to make a regular booking of the hall.

Minting, Gautby & District Heritage Society has successfully run a number of cultural events at the hall over the last year, including a live opera concert, 2 rural touring theatre shows and very recently, an acapella chorus concert. The village hall was pleased to run a bar at each of these events and this has produced welcome income. The village hall committee and the heritage society plan on running 2 further rural touring events in the forthcoming season.

We have also held several of fundraising events for the hall itself, such as the pre-Christmas event and we need to continue to do this in the future and have the support of the village in order that the hall can remain open. To this end, we shall be holding a joint summer fete here on Saturday, 9th July; together with Gautby Village Hall; which we hope you will all be able to attend. It's sure to be a great day, with traditional, stalls and games, live music, a BBQ and raffle with some really good prizes.

We continue to publicise our facilities and events on our website, Facebook page and on the parish council's website, and all of these are updated regularly with what's on at the village hall. Recently, we have begun to advertise in the parish magazine too, in order to generate more business.

In addition to maximising bookings, we have been reducing outgoings, by changing electricity suppliers, getting specialised village hall insurance which saved a significant sum and are currently in the process of changing a large number of lightbulbs to low-energy LED ones. We will continue to look at ways of reducing running costs.

We are keen to find out what residents want to see in terms of events on at the hall, so if there are events you would like to see happen here, please tell us what they are and if you have any comments about the hall itself, tell us that too. You may notice that the back wall of the bar has been decorated by the Heritage Society, with photos, maps and other items from their local archive. We have had lots of good feedback about how nice the hall facilities are lately and we plan to continue improving it over the months to come. The new committee will be happy to use any suggestions you make in planning for the future.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the Committee Members who have served this year, both those who are here tonight and those who have had to leave as us over the last 12 months; we certainly wouldn't be able to run the hall without the help of all the people who volunteer their time.

We need your help to continue running the hall. We need committee members who can meet for about an hour once a month, open and close the hall for bookings etc; but also if you can just spare a little time as a volunteer – maybe serving behind the bar for an hour or 2, baking a cake for an event or whatever else you are able to do, so please get in touch if you are able to help.

d) Report from Gautby Village Hall:

Councillor Heselwood read out a report from the Chair of Gautby Village Hall. The committee spent a large amount of money tarmacing the car park last year and is dire need of funds now, so it needs to fundraise. It is also in need of outside decoration, which a Gautby resident has offered to help with. The hall received a grant from County Councillor Hoyes towards the tarmacing, and there was recently a fundraiser evening for St Georges Day. The Parish Council and Heritage Society continue to pay for document storage in the hall and Anglian Water hired the hall for the day for a meeting, which was catered for by the Heritage Society for their funds. The hall committee wishes to thank Sue Cosgrove for auditing their annual accounts.

e) Report from Minting, Gautby and District Heritage Society:

Councillor Heselwood read out a report from the Heritage Society explaining that there was still work to do regarding recording finds and having an expert look at our flints. Thanks to a grant from ELDC, the Heritage Society was able to purchase a new laptop, as the previous laptop was breaking down and becoming unreliable and was already 8 years old. The Heritage Society exists to support various aspect of village life in Minting and Gautby, such as The Venue at Minting project and other

cultural and heritage related activities. To this end, the more people that support the society by using the easyfundraising link, the more funds the society will have to carry out its work. The TVAM project hosted 2 theatrical events at Minting Village Hall, "Instructions for American Servicemen in Britain" and "Origin of Species" with a dinner based on Emma Darwin's cookbook. We also welcomed the Louth-based Zero Degrees Choir for an Acapella concert in April 2016. We are looking forward to participating in the Wolds Word Festival in October with a talk by David Allsop on the theme of the story of Minting and Gautby through archaeological finds.

Joanna and Vicki from the Society used some of the money from easyfundraising to make the temporary heritage display in Minting Village hall bar area into a permanent one. New residents to Minting and Gautby with an interest in Heritage are always welcome to join the Society.

7. Questions from electors

None

8. Reports from District and County Councillors and Police:

The Police were not in attendance.

Councillor Gray of ELDC reported on the current projects being worked on at ELDC: these included the Transformation project, including Footway Lighting and changes to the Customer Access points; this is because over £6 million has to be saved as government funding is being reduced. ELDC is being asked to make sad decisions, which have not had to be made before such as asking others to pay for facilities previously paid for by ELDC, such as public toilets.

Devolution – There is a consultation to decide whether or not to join all the local councils together, to get extra government money. If the decision is yes, an extra £15 million per year will be made available for the next 30 years, but each district council and the county council have to agree in order to take it forward. There would be an elected mayor and deputy and some powers from central government would be devolved to local government.

Core Planning Strategy. This is currently being re-drafted, and will be the policy document underpinning planning decisions. There is currently 1 sticking point, which is the number and different type of travellers' sites which must be provided by the council.

Well Being Service – this is a service now being provided by ELDC to the County Council. Anyone who thinks they are entitled to help can apply, and the help given is based on income, age, ability and disability.

106 new affordable homes were opened in Horncastle last week.

There are now 3 blue flag beaches in the area at Mablethorpe, Skegness and Sutton on Sea.

Broadband – The County Council have asked ELDC for an extra £500,000; to help with broadband roll-out, which has been agreed by ELDC but not yet provided.

The SO Festival will be held again at the end of June, which will bring in extra revenue to the area.

The County Council Elections will be held next year and Councillor Hoyes will be standing down, so a new county councillor will be elected for this area. The candidates have not been announced yet.

Close – 8pm

