

Haconby & Stainfield Parish Council – Chairman’s Report, 2016/17 Annual Parish Meeting 17 May 2017

Haconby & Stainfield Parish Council was deeply saddened by the death of Colin Campbell on 29 March. Colin was co-opted onto the Parish Council in September 2010 and served loyally until July 2016 when he resigned due to ill health. We shall miss his dry and thoughtful support to the parish.

Haconby & Stainfield Parish Council has entered a new local government environment. It is now part of Lincolnshire County Council’s ‘Folkingham Rural’ division. Following the County Council elections on 4 May 2017, our LCC Councillor is now Cllr Martin Hill. We welcome him and look forward to his support. We also formally bid farewell to Cllr Sue Woolley, lost to us following the boundary review, whose support and engagement over the past seven years has been nothing short of outstanding.

It has been a busy and challenging year for the Parish Council. Peter Fisher, a newcomer to the Parish Council, was elected Chairman in May 2016 and resigned in January 2017. Alan Williams, former Chair and the longest serving Parish Councillor, resigned in July 2016. Alan’s contribution to the Council since 2004, as both Chairman and Councillor, was enormous. Beth Cruft, co-opted in September 2015, resigned in October 2016. Bev Bradford, appointed Parish Clerk in September 2015, resigned in September 2016. I thank them all for their various contributions to the Council. We welcomed Johnny Blackburn and Philippa Dixon-Warren, who were co-opted onto the Council in September 2016, and look forward to co-opting two more volunteers in the Annual Parish Council Meeting. It is fair to say that a degree of administrative turbulence followed some of the changes, from which we are still recovering.

Routine business has continued unabated:

Financial

- Financially, the Parish Council remains in the black, but we cannot be complacent. Following a hard look at projected income and expenditure, we decided to increase the precept for this year. The review of allotment policy and income is ongoing. The Parish Council’s budget strategy will be made more transparent in future.

Police

- The civil parish remains a low crime area. The attendance of Police and PCSOs to brief on Police themes of interest maintains the Parish Council’s situational awareness in this respect. The future of the Bourne & Billingborough Neighbourhood Police Panel and our engagement in this group is currently under review.

Parish Emergency Plan

- The Parish Emergency Plan was reviewed following the Chapel Street flood in June. It has recently been updated and is on the Parish Council website. It will be reviewed in July.

Neighbourhood Plan

- The Parish Council continues to maintain a ‘watching brief’ on the Aveland Neighbourhood Plan. Haconby & Stainfield is not part of this plan.

Additional work streams have emerged, some of which seem set to be enduring:

Codes of Conduct/Standing Orders & Policies

- The Council has reviewed, revised and updated its Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Policies, and these will be adopted at the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

Communication with the Parish Community

- The ‘Chattle’ flyer proved a moderate success in getting information in hard copy to parishioners but has had to be discontinued on grounds of cost. Cllr Philippa Dixon-Warren’s Haconby & Stainfield Parish Councillors Facebook group, linked to former Cllr Beth Cruft’s Haconby & Stainfield Facebook page, are proving to be increasingly successful tools in the local communications campaign.

Allotments

- The Parish Council allotments policy review continues, after its interruption last year, and will be more consultative than hitherto. The intent of the review remains to ensure that the allotments are let for the benefit of the community, in conjunction with the Parish financial policy.

Local Government Boundary Commission for England

- The final recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) electoral arrangements and boundaries for Lincolnshire were published on 16 August 2016 and placed Haconby and Stainfield Civil Parish within LCC's 'Folkingham Rural' electoral division. The Parish Council wished to remain part of Bourne and Morton and represented unsuccessfully against this proposal during the consultation.

Telephone Box

- BT have given the Parish Council the option to purchase the Telephone box for £1, on behalf of Haconby, and then use and maintain it for their own purposes. The community of Haconby will be asked to take a decision on its future, while considering the implications of any future use.

Bus Shelter

- The Haconby bus shelter, which belongs to the Council, has been inspected, and work does need to be done this year to bring it up to a satisfactory standard. Again funds will have to be found to complete the work.

The Parish Council was involved in three significant events in the parish:

The Chapel Street Flood

- A flood in June, which turned Chapel Street into a river for a few hours. A Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue Service appliance and crew responded and a small number of properties suffered water damage. The incident prompted a long overdue inspection of the drains along Chapel Street by LCC, a review of the Parish Emergency Plan, and a handy scenario for the LCC Emergency Planning Training Session run in July.

The Defibrillator

- The funding of a defibrillator, now bolted to the wall of the Hare & Hounds. This followed two amazingly successful fund raising events at the Hare & Hounds, and the LIVES training session for the defibrillator was standing room only. A public thanks to all those involved in the fund raising.

Haconby Green & Tree

- The loss of a large branch off the iconic Haconby horse chestnut tree. The Council thanks those who made the area safe and cleared the debris. Since then, the Council has tried without success to find out who owns the land on which the tree stands and whose responsibility it is to maintain the tree in the future. The 'Green' is not registered to anyone and it seems that no-one is legally responsible for maintaining or insuring the tree. We hope for a community 'good idea' for the future of the tree.

I tender my thanks to:

- Parish, District and County Councillors who have supported this essential part of the structure of local democracy and its vital role in acting on behalf of the community it represents over the past year.
- The Community Beat Manager and PCSOs from our Neighbourhood Policing Team who attend Parish Council meetings when operational pressures permit.
- Derek and Mary Holmes for the continued use of the 'Hare and Hounds' restaurant for our meetings.

The Parish Council has weathered the past year's turbulence and has emerged stronger and more focused. It looks forward to a balance of experienced and fresh approaches to future challenges within the Council. The aim remains to continue to work diligently to represent the local community, delivering services to meet local needs where possible, and improving quality of life and community well-being.

D Winn
Interim Chairman
Haconby & Stainfield Parish Council