

Annual Parish Meeting May 2011

CLAXTON AND SAND HUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

.....
DATE OF MEETING: Monday, 16th May 2011
.....

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Mrs V Tidball (Chair), Dr C Hall, Mr P Stott

PARISH CLERK: Mrs Laura E J Edwards

OTHER ATTENDEES: Several Parishioners.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: District Councillor Keith Knaggs, County Councillor Clare Wood
.....

Please note: The Annual Parish Meeting followed YLCA guidelines in format and so was more informal than a Parish Council meeting. Parish Councillors attended as electors and sat in amongst other parishioners. The discussion was informal in style and wide ranging and so the following minutes just capture the key messages from the meeting.

1) Introduction and Welcome by Chairman of the Parish Council (Viv Tidball)

VT welcomed the Parish Councillors and members of the public to the meeting. VT highlighted that the meeting would have an informal format and that there were soft drinks and nibbles available. This is not a meeting of the Parish Council but for practical purposes, the Chairman of the Parish Council is expected to Chair the Annual Parish Meeting – a meeting for all the electors in the Parish to discuss current issues.

2) Parish Council Election Update

LE explained to the meeting the current status of the Parish Council and the problems with the May elections procedure. 2 issues had occurred in the weeks running up to the 5th May polling day which meant that the election process for our Parish was invalid:-

1) There had only been 2 nominations from Sand Hutton and 0 nominations from Claxton to become Parish Councillors. By law, there must be 3 Councillors to make a quorum for our Parish Council and so since there were only 2 out of 6 Councillors, a Parish Council could not form.

2) The new Democratic Services team at RDC treated our Parish as 2 separate villages rather than a combined or joint Parish and so the election process was invalid anyway. After providing minutes from 1965 when Claxton joined Sand Hutton, RDC have now been persuaded that we are single Parish with one Council, one set of accounts, one set of minutes etc!

The conclusion of this unusual set of circumstances is that there will have to be second round of elections with a polling date of 16th June. LE appealed for anyone interested in becoming a Parish Councillor to contact her and she could provide further information and a nomination pack.

Nomination packs needed to be submitted by noon on 19th May.

In the interim, the legal department at RDC have provided a Standing Order to allow Viv, Caroline and Peter to continue in office as Parish Councillors until the first meeting after the election. So there is a temporary Parish Council in place to deal with any immediate issues until we can legally hold the Annual Parish Council meeting in late June.

LE then introduced the main topics for debate and captured the main ideas on a flip chart. Please note this is a summary of those ideas rather than a verbatim record.

3) Local Involvement – what would encourage you to join a local group or committee?

LE invited the meeting to put forward thoughts and ideas about how we might encourage more involvement from the community, particularly when we have been struggling to find volunteers to be Parish Councillors, join the Village Hall Committee, run village clubs etc.

- Big Society changes – if there was more power and funding (?) at a local level and if local people felt they could make a difference rather than relying on District/regional councils.
- If changes happened at a faster pace and successes were more visible.
- If there was more communication eg more information on the website, better ways to reach new people coming into the village.
- If communication was suitable for all eg minutes available in a bigger typeface.
- More direct communication straight to the doorstep eg leaflets/flyers – what about the costs?
- More inclusion of certain groups eg elderly residents who may be isolated.
- More warning of dates of meetings and an annual programme of meetings, if possible.
- If there were greater / more formal links between community groups eg the Village Hall, the Parish Council, the local school, the church – at present there is very little communication/sharing of ideas.
- Could meeting dates / more information on community groups be included in The Circular?
- If there was a greater knowledge of the skills within our communities eg hidden talents (!), teaching, nursing, languages, wood working, plumbing, other practical skills etc.
- If there was a more welcoming, relaxed, social feeling (tea and biscuits) for some meetings – some have to be formal but could they have a less formal gathering afterwards?
- If commitments to groups could be shared / part-time so they were not a such a challenge eg the Village Hall bookings are being shared between 2 people now.
- More community events which bring different residents together.
- If there were more common interest groups eg Wildlife / Ecology Group or a Walking Group
- If we learnt lessons from groups that are working well such as the Heritage Group.
- If there was an aim eg achieving an award / 'Flowers In Bloom' etc or a competitive element
- If there was a village appearance related activity such as pavement tidying, maintaining the planters etc.
- If there were more ways of asking questions – What do residents want? Perhaps on the website?

Laura's Diagram of Involvement – the Challenge!

Silent Majority of Residents – not sure what they think? / some insights from Parish Plan / how can they be involved?

Small 'Anti-change' group who complain > Send complaints to Active Group

Small Group with Vision – not always the same vision > Vent frustration to Active Group

Small Active Group that join in everything but get overloaded

4) Local Children – where can children play together in our villages?

LE and VT turned the discussion towards young people in the village – what facilities are there for them in the villages and are there ideas for new activities?

- Village hall based activities eg pet show or pet club / junior film club / reading or book club / chess club / photographic club. Who would organise these activities?
- Village green – chess club held outside / table top sales / tea parties / picnics.
- School field – cricket / rounders / football competition. NB still need to resolve insurance issues.

- Key family gardens – in every village there are gardens which seem to collect children.
- Caravan site – could the facilities be more accessible to local children eg play equipment? Could there be a shed for campers and local teenagers for darts / table football etc when weather is poor? Insurance issues again.
- Small jobs for local children eg delivery of leaflets, minor gardening/weeding, pavement tidying. Safety issues?
- More street parties/ community events where children can meet other members of the community.
- Secret places – where do the teenagers go? They seem to disappear at age 13.
- Obtaining land from local landowners – rental / compulsory purchase (?) / grants – legal issues?
- More contacts with local school and Parent Teachers Association to share ideas.
- What do the local children think? How can the Parish Council and others obtain their ideas? Website?

5) Local Environment – how would you choose to manage our verges and pathways?

LE asked the meeting to consider the management of our verges and pathways – not to consider just what is happening now but what could happen?

- Paths through local woodland – access to local woodland paths is very important to local people but may be threatened by the recent sale of local parcels of woodland. Can the Parish Council obtain information about the new ownership of the woodlands? Involves a fee. Certain local residents and Councillors are investigating the access status of the paths with the help of NYCC – the key issue is the original ownership ie Church Commission or Forestry Commission and whether the paths have been used regularly for 20 years (they have).
- Harvesting of local woodlands – concern was expressed at the recent, dramatic felling of some woodland on Sand Hutton Lane. The Parish Council had been advised a few months ago that there would be harvesting but then restocking. It was noted that the Forestry Commission had left a few trunks standing as eco-poles.
- More maintenance of our street side pathways eg pavement sweeping / tidying.
- Restoration or replacement of the village name signs at the entrances to the village. They look uncared for now.
- Planters or planting to denote the entrance to the villages as per Long Marston. This has also been recommended by Highways as a traffic calming measure as it clarifies the entrance to a residential, village area.
- More attention given to our waterways and water bodies eg The Stank, beck on Whinny Lane, brick ponds.
- More management of verges and paths for wildlife eg timing of grass cutting to fit around wildflower cycles.
- NYCC recommend cutting verges only 1M in from the edge of the road so that wildflowers can survive behind this cutting zone.
- Sharing ideas on management and managing for wildlife with other local organisations eg the school has a wildlife area / FERA has wildflower meadow etc and lots of knowledge.

6) Conclusion of the meeting

LE explained that all of the ideas raised that evening would be collated and then published as minutes in the usual ways eg on the notice boards, website and Enews service. All the ideas would be passed to the new Parish Council when it is formed in June. **LE** thanked everyone for their participation, ideas and involvement!

LE and VT then closed the meeting and **LE** invited attendees to remain for informal discussion and refreshments.

Date of next Parish Council meeting:- Monday 27th June at 7.30pm in Sand Hutton Village Hall

=====

PLEASE DIRECT ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE MEETING TO THE CLERK:

Laura EJ Edwards – Clerk to the Parish Council
Chariman

Viv Tidball –

Email: laura.edwards@claxtonandsandhuttonparishcouncil.org.uk

FERA CAR PARKING SCHEME REMINDER

If you live within the Parish and want to take advantage of FREE weekend parking at FERA visitors car park so you can catch the bus into York / the coast, please email the Clerk with your name, full address and car registration number. Parish Clerk email =
laura.edwards@claxtonandsandhuttonparishcouncil.org.uk