

# Hawksworth Parish Meeting

## 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 7.30pm

**Chairman : Chris Bradwell (CB)**

**Parish Clerk : Neil Smith (NS)**

**Present:** Fi Barton, Chris Clayton, Gary Cooke, Anne Dunn, Steve & Sarah Hadfield, Alistair Henderson, Eric Holden, Nigel Madison-Rowe, Andy & Chris Matthias, Robert & Pedella Monk, Jill Roberts, Doug & Lynn Ross, Margrete von Schomberg, Pauline Smith, Suzzie Sowka, Geoffrey Spence, Greg & Pam Stevens, Colin Tompkins

**Non Voting Attendee:** Stephen Drew

**Apologies:** Brian Asher , Tim Baker, Jane Baker, Paul Bramley, Sue & John Brydon, Trisby Carleton, Jane Clayton, Elaine Cooke, Rosie Counsell, Di & Ron Edmonds, Steve & Janet Evans, Jen Hollingshead, Les & Steph Shaw

**Main reasons for the meeting:**

- Set the precept / parish tax
- Solar Farm Update
- Planning Update

### 1 BUDGET & PRECEPT FOR 2023/24

Each year a sum of money called a **precept** is collected from the parish through the Council Tax. In Hawksworth this money has been used to fund the running costs and repairs to the community hall/church. The precept is charged against all households in Hawksworth by Rushcliffe Borough Council - as part of everyone's Council Tax. The amount is decided by this Parish Meeting. The actual amount paid per household is pro rata according to the Council Tax Valuation Band

Net village funds (all three village bodies – Parish Meeting, HCA, and PCC) stand at **£40,188** an increase of £5,799 on January 2022. (Draft Accounts were presented to the meeting for information)

Excluding the precept income and any project or significant building repair costs we expect this to be reduced by c£7,500 in the next financial year for our normal running costs. Leaving a balance of c£32.000 net of a contingency.

The chair noted it is unlikely that inflation will drop to single figures. Steve Hadfield noted the electricity costs will probably double as we come off a fixed tariff in February, and the "Group Share" paid to the diocese is likely to increase.

#### **Potential Projects**

- The only project currently in hand is the Tympanum on south wall which is getting badly eroded – proposal to make a copy for the outside wall and bring the original inside. Estimated cost £20,000 but grants are available. Steve Hadfield advised that after previously agreeing the faculty and planning being granted the diocese are now reviewing it again. It is hoped we will have agreement sometime this year but unlikely to be a major expenditure in 2023/24.
- The arch curtain is the other major building project under consideration. Again, this will need a faculty so unlikely to be major expenditure in 2023/24.

- The big unknown is the Solar Farm Application, and how much this will cost to fight ( see below )

## How much precept do YOU want to raise for 2023/2024?

### Current year from April 2022

The parish meeting last January decided to keep the precept at the same amount as the previous year. A precept of £11,200 was raised from the parish rates. This means that currently for 2021/22, Band D properties are paying £156 per year and Band H properties are paying £312 for the year.

For your information, as previously pointed out, this is the highest band tax rate in Rushcliffe but as we have a small number of households, the precept raised is not the largest. It was agreed again that the precept is the most cost-effective means of running the village hall/church.

### Next year from April 2023

Options for the precept set out below were described to the meeting:

These are some example figures for Hawksworth based on this year's Tax Base figure of 71.6, using the calculation Band D = Precept/Tax Base. Neil Smith advised the meeting the Tax Base had risen from 66.9 last year.

#### **Option 1 To raise the same sum of money as last year:**

If the total sum required for Hawksworth stays the same as last year at **£10,400**.

This means Band D will pay approx £145pa and Band H will pay £290 pa.

Each household pays 7% less due to the increase in the Tax Base

#### **Option 2 To keep household payments the same as last year**

To keep the band payments the same, for Band D to £156pa and Band H to £312 pa, the precept raised would be c£11,200, an increase of 8% due to change in tax base.

#### **Option 3 To reduce the payments to 50%:**

To reduce the band payments by about half, for Band D to £78 and Band H to £156 pa, the precept raised would be c£5,600. This would cover our annual running costs.

#### **Option 4 To abolish the precept for this year**

**Proposal – To increase precept by 10% to cover the increase in operating costs and the potential for additional funds required to fight the Solar Application.**

**Decision:** Proposal to increase by 10% made by Alistair Henderson, Seconded by Geoffrey Spence. 19 in favour, 0 against.

## 2 PROJECT UPDATES

### a. Tympanum

The meeting previously agreed in principle to move the original inside and replace it with a suitable replacement. We have now received the stonemasons report, the faculty and most recently planning permission. Steve noted that new staff at Southwell have required more information which has created more delays. We cannot approach funding bodies for grants without diocese approval. We remain in limbo. The meeting thanked Steve for his work.

**b. Glass Screen(s)**

The original idea for glass screen was too expensive to go forward, however alternatives were still of interest, both for the arch and the side door. More discussion of options at May meeting

**c. Wi-fi**

Neil advised Wi-fi extender was on order – due in March.

**d. Flag Pole**

This idea remains of interest. Further discussion at May meeting

**3 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- a. Applications approved since last meeting (May 22)
  - None
- b. Applications rejected since last meeting (May 22)
  - None
- c. Applications submitted – yet to be decided
  - Solar Farm

This is also opportunity to just remind you that the established procedure of the Parish is to only call a meeting concerning a planning application if someone in Hawksworth requests a meeting.

**4 UPDATE on SOLAR FARM APPLICATION**

Neil updated the meeting on the application. At our meeting in early January we agreed to establish a working group to fight the application. \

We have joined together with Thoroton and created a working group to jointly oppose the application drawing in support from our neighbouring villages and beyond. This group has been meeting every week and have developed:

- PR and Communications activities including local papers and radio. We continue to maximise media exposure
- Leafleting campaign around local villages to maximise objections recorded on the RBC website. Maximising objections is very important, especially during an election period (local elections 4<sup>th</sup> May )
- Working with national campaign groups to create our objection to the application.

At this stage we do not have a financial budget. Our initial expenditure is limited to our leafleting campaign. This will cost c £200 for the initial 1000 leaflets plus posters.

Neil requested approval for a budget of £1,000 to cover leafleting, PR campaign investigation, and technical consultant briefing costs. Requests for further funds will come to a full meeting.

The meeting unanimously approved the budget of £1,000.

**5 PARISH MEETING CHAIRMAN**

After more than 20 years as chair, Chris advised the village he will be standing down at the AGM in May. He thanked the village for the fantastic support received over such a long period of time.

The election process will be advised by Neil before Easter to allow the election for chair to take place at the AGM. Chris has volunteered to chair the AGM to allow the successor time to prepare for their first meeting.

## 6 **VILLAGE WEBSITE**

Anne Dunn and Chris Bradwell discussed the potential for a village website in autumn 2022, and Anne have been busy creating it since then. They have jointly paid for the first year fees. The concept is to keep it as simple as possible as a repository of the village events and activities. To avoid it becoming out of date it will not hold current "chat" and discussion, that is covered by our email, whatsapp, and facebook.

The village supported the development and look forward to seeing the site at the May meeting. It was agreed the village will cover the operating costs of the site.

## 7 **PURGE the VERGE**

Thank you to everyone who is clearing our verges whilst out on their walks. We are proud to see how clear our verges are compared to surrounding villages.

Unfortunately this work never stops and can we please encourage everyone to pick up litter when out walking. This doesn't mean a total clearance, if we all picked up one piece every time we went out the verges would remain clear.

We will hold our Purge the verge event at the end of February, early March. Please join us if you can.

## 8 **SOCIAL EVENTS**

- a. **Pub Nights** remain popular and will continue on the second Friday of the month through the spring including "Hawksworth Agricultural Group, and a Quiz.
- b. **Coronation** – Nigel is "booked" for Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May – we will have meeting to make arrangements for the day. All welcome – get your thinking caps on !
- c. **Fun Day** – Robert and Pedella have kindly offered to host us again in the summer. Dates etc to be arranged later in the year.
- d. **Golf Society** – Eric proposed to set up a Hawksworth golf society – this was appreciate by several attendees. Eric to progress this for the summer.

## 9 **AOB**

- a. **Village Directory** – Neil noted this was du for an update. Please let Neil have any changes.
- b. **Directory of Services** – Alison suggested a directory of services to help source services, eg plumbers, builders etc, especially for those new to the village. Neil volunteered to compile a list
- c. **Thanks** – The village thanks Alison and the team who planted the daffodils along the church wall. We look forward to a lovely display in Spring.

Meeting Closed at 20.40.

