

MELTON CONSTABLE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 11TH MAY 2010

The Annual Parish Meeting of Melton Constable was held on the 11th May at The Country Club. The meeting was very well attended by over 50 people.

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 12th May 2009 were signed as correct.

Chairman Adrian Loynes thanked everyone for attending the meeting in such good numbers and outlined the process if any voting was to take place. He gave a brief resume of the activities of the Council during the year including the railway project, asbestos removal from the allotments, the Colville Road footway scheme, the Stody Estates application for reservoirs, the website, street lighting, the play area, anti social behaviour and the work done by the new Clerk. He reported that a new year would bring fresh challenges and thanked councilors for all their hard work between meetings, parishioners for showing interest in council meetings and stated that Melton Constable was a wonderful village with a lot to give.

The Parish Accounts were presented showing expenditure was greater than income and the very large figures over the previous year were due to the Solar Lighting Project. It was explained that the accounts had not been audited yet but were not expected to change. There were no comments on the accounts.

The Chair welcomed Steve Blatch from NNDC and Clare Bailey from NCC. Steve Blatch gave a presentation in respect to the community concerns over issues relating to migrant workers. He outlined who migrant workers were and where they mostly came from, their rights to come to the UK to work, what type of work they mostly did including areas where there have been shortages of labour. He explained the pattern of migrant workers moving to Norfolk and the numbers that were believed to be in North Norfolk of 2500 although he pointed out that once a worker was registered there was no way of recording if they moved from district to district. He continued to explain the rights of these workers to receive benefits and social housing and then turned his attention to the specific problems as reported to him in respect of Melton Constable including drinking on the streets, rubbish disposal, houses in multiple occupation and issues relating to parking and driving vehicles. He pointed out that the District Council had not been aware of the problems in Melton Constable until quite recently but they were very happy to help in whatever way they were able to and would look at the introduction of Designated Public Places Orders and Houses in Multiple Occupation although the current regulations on HMO's would not cover many properties in Melton Constable but this was being looked into on a policy basis by NNDC.

Steve Blatch indicated his willingness to take questions and listen to concerns which he could take back to NNDC.

Comments made and issues raised included the following:-

- The number of migrant workers was not known and there were many more than surveys suggested
- The migrants do not understand the UK ways in respect of rubbish, drinking on the streets and basic social behaviour in the UK
- Children frightened because of fights outside where they live, sex on vehicles in public and a report of a child knocked off their bicycle
- General public afraid of one gangmaster
- Reported that when calling the Police told that they were wasting Police time
- Loud music very late at night and the NNDC contact in such cases does not work
- The migrants have nowhere to socialize
- Residents have not taken the time or trouble to get to know the migrants or to try and build an understanding with them although some residents have with good results
- Fires in houses occupied by migrant workers

In response Steve Blatch outlined the procedure with the Environmental Team at NNDC and suggested that a Community Liaison Officer who would be neutral could help to sort out problems if that is what the village wanted

PC Jamie Wedderburn of Holt SNT informed the meeting that people should not be afraid to call the Police but also outlined that they could not always attend at that moment as all calls for attendance were graded.

Both Steve Blatch and PC Jamie Wedderburn pointed out that if calls to either NNDC or the Police were not answered they wanted to know about in order that the service provided could be improved.

Clare Bailey from NCC suggested that agencies should come together to see what could be achieved collectively, what could the community offer to help solve current problems, leaflets with regard to acceptable behaviour, a better understanding of who to contact when problems arise and what members of the public expected

Other issues raised at the meeting included:-

- The new street lights – the Chair explained that there were problems and answers would be given at the next PC meeting
- People leaving the Country Club late one evening and causing a disturbance – the Chair replied that the problem was known about and was being dealt with
- Grass growing on pavements – PC to discuss at next meeting
- The declassification of the road leading through the village – brought to the meeting as a result of the renewed application by Stody Estates

The Chair suggested that there were 5 main points to take to the Parish Council arising from the meeting:-

- Reporting of problems to the Police and NNDC

- Who should be contacted when problems arise and how should that information be given to all residents
- Expert help was available – the Council to coordinate with all parties including the migrant workers with the possibility of setting up a working party to look into this
- Problems with pavements
- The declassification of the main road through the village

The Chair thanked Steve Blatch, Clare Bailey, Holt SNT and residents/general public for attending the meeting and making it a very positive and productive meeting.