

HAUGHLEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

13 May 2024

Chairman's Report

1. The Council

- 1.2 Since the last meeting regretfully Councillors Alf and Yvonne Hannan have resigned from the PC. They served the Council very well and we are grateful for the positive input for quite a number of years.
- 1.3 We are pleased to have welcomed two new members, Alison Pepper and Yvonne Tricker who joined us in June. Both have been very active and I think we will hear from both during this meeting.
- 1.4 Currently, we have two vacancies. If you might be interested in joining the Parish Council, please contact Claire who is Clerk to Haughley Parish Council.
- 1.5 I am very grateful for the support of all our Parish Councillors, our County Councillor Andrew Stringer and our District Councillors Rachel Eburne and Janet Pearson.
- 1.6 I am particularly grateful for the knowledge and support of our Clerk, Claire Pizzey who has been a tremendous help throughout the year.
- 1.7 HPC employs Katie on a part time basis who regularly picks litter around the main part of the village of Haughley. I am sure most of you know her or at least have seen Katie out and about on a regular basis.
- 1.8 In addition, we have a contractor (~~P Garrod~~) who undertakes maintenance tasks for the Council around the Parish on a self-employed basis.

2. Meetings

- 3.1 Since the last APM, HPC has held 10 Parish Council meetings, having missed August as scheduled, whilst last year the APM followed the HPC meeting in May, whilst this year the APM is before the May HPC meeting.
- 2.2 We held an additional meeting to consider a particular planning application as we were not granted an extension to the time limit to respond.
- 2.3 Members and our Clerk have between them attended each of the public consultation meetings put on by Highways England which became National Highways and the Principal Contractors undertaking the reconstruction works on the A14 between junctions 47a and 49. At these meetings, representations and concerns, particularly those affecting the Parish, have been raised, generally with reasonably good feedback.
- 2.4 We inaugurated joint meetings with adjoining and nearby Parishes to identify common problems, areas where we may be able to help each other and cooperate on inter parish projects. Our second quarterly meeting is scheduled for tomorrow evening.
- 2.5 Councillors have attended various other meetings either in person or electronically, including Community Climate Action held at Theltham and the Complying with Biodiversity Duty.

3. Committees and Working Groups

- 4.1 The Council has a range of Committees and Working Groups which have been set up to advise the Council, with separate reports being submitted for this meeting.
- 3.2 All Councillors are involved with one or more of these committees and working groups and in addition, they take on individual responsibilities.

4. Training

- 5.1 Well informed councillors are beneficial to the Parish, the Council and the individual Councillor. To this end, I am pleased to report that we held a training session for the whole council, whilst a good number of individuals have attended training provided by SALC, that is the Suffolk Association of Local Councils.
- 4.2 Claire, Thirza and I provide additional links with SALC and have attended separate briefing meetings for Clerks, Chairmen and a number of more specialised subjects and also the SALC Conference.
- 4.3 We also have several Councillors who are trained in Safeguarding, either through their employment or their voluntary work.
- 4.4 Three Councillors have received training (and passed the examination) under the Community Self-Help Scheme between SCC (Highways department) and HPC to help with minor maintenance adjoining certain roads.
- 4.5 The Clerk and I attended a briefing on the proposed SCC Devolution Consultation, which is currently open and has been the subject of the screen presentation prior to this meeting. The closing date for this consultation is 26 May. It is proposed that the PC will submit a response but individuals wishing to submit commits should do so in addition to the PC.

5. Planning

- 6.1 As a Parish Council, we are included as consultees in respect of planning applications relating to the Parish of Haughley that have been submitted to Mid Suffolk District Council as the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.2 We support some applications, support some subject to comments, and we have objected to some with reasons.
- 5.3 We have received notifications of decisions made in respect of most of planning applications within our Parish. These are reported within Parish Council minutes which are published on our website.
- 5.4 In addition, we were consulted on one planning application to Suffolk County Council in respect of minerals extraction, for which we held a very well attended special meeting and submitted our response to the County Council.

5.5 We have been made aware and are mindful of a number of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects in the region, including:

- National Grid proposed additional pylon line between Norwich and Tilbury, noting that there is significant pressure for alternative routes to be reconsidered,
- Sizewell C which will probably increase traffic on the A14 which crosses through our Parish,
- Large solar panel projects such as that proposed for Mendlesham.

Whereas these do not directly affect Haughley

- Upgrading the railway junctions at Ely and Haughley almost certainly will directly affect residents in Haughley.

6. **Traffic and travel**

7.1 Not surprisingly, traffic and travel have been a major concern to Councillors and residents alike. The main problem areas remain as in recent years, and in no particular order, Green Road by the school, Rattlers Row adjoining the Bakery, the narrow section by the Village Hall, Old Street including by the junction with Station Road, Station Road itself, parts of Fishponds Way, Haughey New Street and Haughley Green.

7.2 We have invested in –

- (SIDs) that's speed indicator devices in various parts of the Parish,
- arranged for vehicle counts – three during 2023 and three scheduled for 2024,
- provided various signs and gateways with advice from County and District Councils and sought replacement of other signs that became damaged beyond repair or are missing. The success rate varies but we thank our District and County Councillors for their support on these and other matters.

7.3 The Parish Council representatives and our County Councillor attended a meeting arranged by residents in a certain part of the Parish to discuss traffic issues.

7.4 A major problem remains the number of HGVs passing through our village and hamlets. I am hopeful that the extent of traffic through Haughley New Street will reduce following completion of the A14 works due in August coming. I am also hopeful that HGV traffic through Haughley will reduce as the developments in Bacton are completed. But there is very little that we can do to mitigate local traffic, which includes HGVs to parts of Bacton and Station Road in Haughley. Despite there being 7½ tonne weight limits on various roads, these restrictions do not apply to traffic travelling to and from local businesses and we do not have the power of enforcement.

7.5 We took part in a consultation with nearby Parishes and a bus operator to consider bus services for Haughley and adjoining parishes. A service scheme has been established for certain nearby parishes but exclude Haughley and our adjoining parishes, whilst an option that included Haughley, Bacton and Old Newton was being considered when a limited bus

service through Haughley was reinstated. The proposal that was being considered would have been a relatively expensive option for the Parish and users alike.

7. Other matters have included:

- 8.1 We have continued to work with others to upgrade and maintain certain footpaths around the Parish, but most of this is not work which we can undertake ourselves as generally we are not the landowners.
- 8.2 Dog poo is a perennial problem. There are 14 dog poo bins around the Parish plus litter bins, the purchase cost and servicing of which has to be paid for. I am very grateful to those responsible dog owners who clear up after their dog or dogs and even more so to the small number of people who are prepared to clear poo left by other people's dogs in certain areas.
- 8.3 We continue to consult with the developers of the new estate off Fishponds Way, including in respect of the new wildflower meadow. This is due to be transferred to the Parish Council this coming autumn. The play equipment adjoining this development is open for general use with its maintenance being included with other common areas on and adjoining that development.
- 8.4 The proposed junior football pitch adjoining the development off Green Road remains the subject of discussion and negotiation with the developers.
- 8.5 The Parish Council supported certain events in the Parish during the last year, including celebrations for the Coronation of King Charles III, the 850th anniversary of the attack on Haughley Castle followed by the Medieval Feast in the Village Hall.
- 8.6 The Emergency Plan for the Parish has been updated and adopted.
- 8.7 The annual Christmas Tree Event was held on The Green which was enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.
- 8.8 Fly tipping is a problem in many areas, not just Haughley. We are grateful to MSDC who have reacted quickly when they have been advised of fly tipping on public property in our Parish, but unfortunately this service does not include fly tipping on private property.
- 8.9 Storms Babet and Kieron caused flooding in many areas. We have not been made aware of related damage in Haughley, although monitoring revealed that the Wetherden Stream flooded adjoining areas on more than one occasion.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 Finally, I would like to thank everyone here for attending this evening and I look forward to learning more about the many groups and organisations within Haughley.
- 9.2 Any questions?