

**MINUTES OF A THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF HOLYWELL-CUM-NEEDINGWORTH HELD
ON TUESDAY 15th APRIL 2025 AT 6.30pm at Millfield's Pavilion, Mill Way, Needingworth**

PRESENT:

Cllr A Whyte (Chairman)
5 Parish Councillors
CCC K Reynolds
Ms D Elmer - Chairman VHT
No member of the public
Miss J Bowd (Parish Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence.

Cllr N Dyne
Cllr E McNeill
Cllr J Neish
Cllr C Pearce

2. Minutes of the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting

The Minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting were signed as a true and correct record.
(Prop Cllr MacPherson, 2nd Cllr Whyte) 5 in favour 2 abstentions

3. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman of the Parish Council's report attached as Appendix A
No Questions were asked.

4. To receive questions relating to reports from the following local organisations / bodies (submitted reports can be found on the Parish Council website)

- CCC (Appendix B)

Cllr K Reynolds read out a report.
No Questions were asked.

- HDC

No representative attended.

- Needingworth Village Hall Trust Report.

D Elmer read out a report from the Trust. (Appendix C)

Cllr MacPherson asked if improvements were to be made to the heating system once solar panels are installed as the building is very cold.

The Trust consider solar panels to be the first stage and that they are carrying out an energy audit and looking into ground source heat pumps.

Clerk asked if an agreement had been reached for the sale of the excess energy generated by the solar panels as she was aware of a nearby Council that has not been able to sort a buyer.

This is in hand with the supplier.

- Relief in Need Charity

Clerk read out the following:

Year ending 31/3/25

Opening balance	£856.81
Interest	<u>£ 8.59</u>
Withdrawals	£ 0.00
Balance 31/3/25	£ 865.40

No grants approved in this financial year.

Trustees for Parish Council:

Sarah Mortlock

Andrew Whyte
E MacPherson
Jane Bowd (administrator)

Clerk advised that the Church had not confirmed its representatives as Trustees and therefore no meeting has been held during the year.

Clerk advised that the charity has been de registered with the charities commission due to the lack of activity.

NS& I who hold funds no longer send statements.

Clerk was asked if the charity is advertised to which she confirmed it is in the Villager and on the Parish noticeboards around the villages.

5. Financial Report of the Council.

Figures for year ending 31st March 2024.

Income £170649

Expenditure £208833

£203121.17 carried forward as general and allocated reserves. This figure did not include investment of £85000.00 in a fixed term bond that was included on the asset register.

CIL earmarked reserve £157421.89

General reserve £47987.76

Precept £137090.00 (Band D £124.03)

Copy of Annual report has been distributed to all houses and incorporates a copy of these accounts.

Internal audit CAPALC Ltd

External audit PKF Littlejohn completed on **11th August 2024.**

Both audit reports are available to view on the Parish Council website.

Draft figures for year ending 31st March 2025.

Please note: These figures have been prepared on Income & Expenditure basis.

The accounts have not yet been presented to, approved by council or been subject to audit.

From the bank reconciliation:

Income £ 176767.21

Expenditure £190836.16

£274052.22 carried forward as general and allocated reserves.

CIL earmarked reserve £131836.68

General reserve £43000.00

Internal audit will be carried out by CAPALC Ltd 1st May 2025.

External auditors appointed PKF Littlejohn LLP.

The Parish Councils Annual Report will be published by 30th September 2025.

Precept for new financial year 2025/26. £141203.00

This equates to a band D property paying £128.18 per annum – £4.15 per annum increase on a Band D which equates to 3.28 % increase on 2024/25)

6. Public Open Forum.

None

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19.00pm

Chairman

Date

APPENDIX A

Welcome to the annual parish meeting 2024/2025

We have had some changes over the last year – Cllr Head, Cllr Martin, Cllr Holloway, and Cllr Williamson resigned. We have however co-opted Cllr Dyne, Cllr Coral Norman and Cllr Geoff Norman.

Planning issues

Both villages are still classified as small settlements therefore we should not be subject to large scale development, but we are now in a better balance

We have dealt with 17 planning applications

Land north of Lodel farm Overcote lane for 30 affordable houses is still on going.

Envar was passed on appeal

Projects and achievements

On the 6 June 2024 we held the D Day 80 event the day was well supported thanks to those who made this event happen

The last coat of paint was applied to the lock up on the high street so at last the renovation is completed

More trees were planted in the playing field and seem to be growing and coming on well.

In November the Remembrance Day service was again well attended. Thank you to the yarn bombers for the display of poppies and all the other knitted items around the village and thank you to the volunteers who helped with the road closures

We held a stall at the Christmas bazaar in the village hall which was well attended thanks to everyone who helped on the day

This year the Christmas tree was moved from the old pond site in church street to Pound Hill we had some issues with the lights hopefully they will be sorted out for the following year

We installed a Bleed control box at the village hall – which is located by the front doors.

We received an award from Anglia in Bloom for planters situated outside the village hall well done and thanks to everyone who helped maintain the planters

The fire hooks have been removed for refurbishment hopefully they will be back soon

We started negotiations with Cambs County Council re the purchase of the Falklands woods we are still waiting for the county council to reply to us

We are still working with the village hall trust regarding the proposed stage extension the findings of the parish survey of the village hall will be available soon

We agreed to assist the school with installing a new muga this is still on going whilst funds are raised.

We have on going with issues with the space net on Overcote playing field and still taking legal advice.

The base to the village sign has now been repaired and is looking much better.

We appointed a working party which is planning for VE Day 80 which will be held on the 8 of May 2025

Finally

I would like to thank the Parish Council staff and the Parish councillors for all the work they have done over the last year

APPENDIX B

Quick overview of CCC, provided over 800 services both directly or in partnership, these are either

Mandatory (required by law) or

Discretionary Local Political choice

21 County Councils across the country, 62 Unitary authorities plus metropolitan and London boroughs and 10,000 Parish / Town Councils

To name a few, CCC is responsible for Education, Highways, children's and adult social services, public health, libraries, Trading Standards, Waste Disposal, Strategic planning Registration services

We have over 11,000 children who require Special Education Needs support

We have nearly 8,000 adults who receive long term social care

There are almost 3,000 social care cases at any one time

We have a Net budget of £540 million with almost three quarters of it spent of Adult Social Care on Children's services including grants and income raised we have a total spend of £1,011 million total spend. This gives us a significant budget gap each year, hence our need to continually look for savings

Cambridgeshire continues to score more highly than the national average in terms of value for money but very poorly in road and pavement maintenance

As I have tried to explain previously it is a very wide remit and we often do not have the financial resources to deliver what the public want and expect.

Locally, I try to deal with issues as they arise and generally succeed but the 2 ongoing issues yet to be fully resolved are

Loose man hole cover in Church Street, which is very noisy

Verges along Holywell front, which is a complex issue involving common land

APPENDIX C

Needingworth Village Hall Chair's Report for Parish Council – April 2025

The Needingworth Village Hall Trust (VHT) Management Committee (MC) currently sits at 9 members of which 7 are Trustees. At the MC's first meeting after the 2024 AGM in May, Debbie Williams and Adrian Dobbyne were re-elected as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively and Mark Hebert was re-elected as Secretary. Rose Killock retired after an outstanding 27 years as a Trustee. I think that is a record but Roy and Margaret are making great strides to beat that record at 22 and 20 years respectively. At the AGM we also welcomed 2 new Trustees, Ian Madden who took over as Treasurer and Meena Biczysko who took the lead on Policies and Procedures. In June, Eleanor Hardy, our booking secretary resigned citing a lack of time due to increasing family commitments. We were pleasantly surprised to receive nearly 20 responses to our advert and after initial calls about the role with those interested, we went on to interview 8 people. After a brief handover period, Jane Banks joined the team and took over at the start of September. There were no other changes to the MC members.

Whilst our end of year accounts are currently being audited the figures submitted show income from bookings, fund-raising events and interest earned over 2024 was nearly £25K. Our expenditure was roughly as follows: Energy, Rates, Telephone, Insurances £11K, Repairs and Maintenance £13K, Salaries, Cleaning Materials, Contract Cleaning, Training and Bar Expenses £12K. We are reporting an overall loss of nearly 7K which was mostly due to increased energy costs and the lack of funds usually raised at NFEST .

There has been very little change in terms of Hall and Pavilion bookings. The Hall continues to be well used but we are still struggling to get Pavilion bookings. The feedback from potential hirers that we get to speak to, continues to be that they are not wanting to hire such a small room. The MC will be very interested to receive the feedback from the wider village community as part of their responses to the Village Survey especially in response to the question asking why residents might not be using the hall. Hopefully these insights will enable us try to address potential barriers so we can increase our booking revenue from the Pavilion in particular.

We had a poor year from a fund-raising perspective. Due to a lack of ticket sales both the Benefit of the Tape and Abba Sounds tribute band nights that we had planned in 2024 had to be cancelled at the last minute. However, the recent VHT Annual Quiz night was well attended and raised some much-needed funds. As reported last year, due to the departure of some key Organising Committee members after NFEST 23, there was no NFEST24 but, thankfully, on the back of the NFEST24 announcement, and with renewed efforts by the MC we received interest from 10 Villagers to help organise the festival going forward. Six of whom went on to become new 'Area Leads' joining the NFEST Organising Committee and I am pleased to report that preparations are well underway for NFEST25!

Another year has passed, and again little progress has been made with our two main longer-term projects; the Hall extension and Solar panels. Discussions continue with the Parish Council and revised plans have been drawn up that take account of the feedback we had received directly on the extension plans. Again, the MC will be very interested to receive the feedback from the wider village community as part of their responses to the Village Survey around the proposed plans for the extension so we can get agreement on the final scope of the project.

The MC repeatedly failed again to secure matched grant funding over the last year for the installation of solar panels. Competition for funding is intense, and as Volunteers, those Trustees involved in this process have struggled to juggle the time needed to repeatedly write applications and provide the inordinate amounts of additional information and supporting documentation required as applications go through the different review rounds. After nearly 3 years of trying to secure funding and being acutely aware of the on-going impact of increased energy costs, a decision was taken in January by the VHT to look at installing a smaller solar system, which would mean we only needed to use the money already held in reserves by the VHT. Updated quotes were obtained and reviewed by the MC in February and shortly afterwards the vendor

chosen came and conducted a site assessment with both representatives from the Trust and members of the Parish Council so hopefully the installation can start in the forthcoming weeks.

In addition to the usual ad hoc maintenance, other building improvements, of note, undertaken include the replacement of the fire doors in the main hall, refurbishment of the gents toilets, repair of the leaks in the flat roof and redecoration of the lobby and hallway area including new flooring being laid down the corridor.

After X years, the Parish Council undertook what I understand is their first ever landlords inspection back in January. It all happens during my time as Chair! The report was thoroughly reviewed by the MC and whilst explanations had to be provided as to why no repairs / changes would be taken on some items, after our last MC meeting we were able to report back that all remaining items were either promptly taken care of or added to the scope of other works already scheduled in and budgeted for over the coming months.

From a Governance point of view, great strides were taken recently when we were able to secure charity status with Microsoft and with help from KTS computers we all now have Microsoft Office 365 accounts. This has meant we have been able to set up a SharePoint site so we can all access Trust documents and information, and each Trustee now has a specific and secure NeedingworthVillageHall.com email account. Some Upskilling of Trustees was required, but everyone has really embraced this change, which is a real step towards us joining the rest of the world operating in the 21st Century.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the VH Trustees along with other MC members. Over the last year, their support and hard work has personally been much appreciated. We continue to work alongside the PC in a spirit of cooperation for the mutual benefit of our community. We receive many complimentary comments on our Village Hall, especially the size of our Main Hall.

Finally, we hope we will see you at our AGM on Monday 19th May at 7.00pm in the Pavilion. We still have 4 Trustee vacancies, maybe more, so we would love to hear from anyone who would like to become a Trustee.

Debbie Williams April 2025