

TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 25th May 2010 at 7.00pm
in Terling Village Hall**

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Present

Mrs S McNamara	
Mrs A Anderson	
Mr R Dixon	
Mr I Smith	
Mr C Cutler	
Mrs P Bird	
Mrs S Alder	Mrs J Halfhide, Parish Clerk
Mrs L Sime	Ms Olive Cowell, ECC Highways Department
Ms H Wiseman	Mr Tony Lynch, Community Warden
	2 members of the public

Minutes of the meetings held on 19th May 2009:

These were unanimously approved.

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report:

The Chairman gave her Annual Report summarizing the work and achievements of the Parish Council during the past twelve months. This would be published on the Parish Council Website and notice boards.

Open Forum:

Concern was expressed about the wider implications of the HGV restriction imposed in Birds Farm Lane and how this affected the community. As the lane was no longer used by HGV drivers the overhanging branches had closed in. Due to the low bridge at Crix and the lane by Noakes Farm being designated a "green lane" HGV drivers had no alternative but to re-route via the centre of Terling. Six buildings had been damaged in the last three years. Olive Cowell agreed to consider how Highways would provide access for the HGVs needed for the agricultural operations in the area (estimated at an average of 20 HGVs per week) and for those serving the domestic dwelling requirements of approximately 140 dwellings.

The flooding under the railway bridge at Crix was discussed. Olive Cowell agreed to follow this up.

Residents had expressed concern about the state of repair of many of the old cast iron directional signs and the number of missing road signs which seemed to have been stolen. The Parish Clerk was asked to compile a list of the problems for Highways to consider. There were also several outstanding directional sign requests which had previously been agreed to by Highways and which were awaiting implementation. Olive Cowell agreed to follow these up.

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Tony Lynch explained that the Community Warden service was being disbanded and that his role was moving more towards environmental enforcement with effect from the end of July. He would be working closely with Environmental Protection Officers at Braintree District Council.

A member of public questioned whether the Parish Council always acted sensitively with regards to local issues, queried its corporate responsibility and doubted whether it always represented the views of the majority of the electorate and was simply an agent for other statutory bodies. Some examples were cited where it has been seen by some that the Parish Council was acting merely as an agent for the District Council or County Council, rather than considering the opinions of the majority of its electorate.

The Chairman responded by explaining that all views were welcomed from the public and the Parish Councillors would consider these comments very carefully indeed, and was grateful for the issue being brought to the Parish Council's attention.

The Chairman explained the role of the Parish Council is to represent the interests of the whole community. Occasionally there are conflicts of interests requiring sensitive judgement. If members of the community make a complaint to the Councillors about an issue the Parish Council has a duty to follow it up, and often it is necessary to consult the relevant District and County Councils to ascertain the facts.

It was, however, acknowledged that in some circumstances it might be more sensitive to try to establish the facts locally first.

The meeting closed at 8:15pm