

# **REPORT OF THE ST MARGARET'S WITH ST NICHOLAS WARD FORUM**

held at Marriotts Warehouse South Quay, King's Lynn

Wednesday, August 10, 2016 at 7.00pm

**Dr Julian Litten in the chair.**

**1. The report of the forum meeting of May 11** was approved by a show of hands. There were no matters arising.

**2. Flood awareness and protection.** In advance of the flood awareness event which the ward forum is organising in September, Environment Agency officers Tamsyn Ellway, Flood Resilience Advisor, and Alan Daniels Operations Team Leader with Kevin Kent, BCKLWN District Emergency Planning Officer reported on the measures which have been and are being taken in light of the North Sea surge in 2013. They outlined the community action which is being taking in other flood prone places and which could be taken in King's Lynn.

The surge had identified a number of problem areas in the town, which needed attention. These have now been tackled and involve:

- £1million worth of essential repairs and maintenance to tidal flood defences between Fisher Fleet and Mill Fleet. This involved refurbishing more than 50 flood gates, re-pointing and repairing flood walls.
- Repairing quay walls to provide a good standard of protection.

In addition:

- Routine grass cutting is approx £25,000 annually.
- Vermin control, particularly badgers, £70,000 annually.
- Repairing embankments where damage has occurred.
- £25,000 removing excess silt that has built up on the concrete revetments that protect the side of the tidal river.
- Annual visual inspections of the tidal river where all defences are checked for their condition.

The officers also said that the agency will give help and advice to the forum should it decide to form a community group. Advice leaflets for householders on all aspects of safeguarding themselves and their property were distributed.

**3. Treasurers' report.** Ms Jenny Perryman reported that forum funds were £7,233.92. She then made a statement voicing her reservations on the fee which was being to Wayne Hart – then a committee member – for his work on the forum website. Ms Perryman is of the opinion that the fee should not be paid because a) the constitution states 'any payments made to officers or members shall be only for reimbursement of reasonable expenses and which shall be strictly conditional on prior approval by the committee'.

It had been the practice that committee members gave their services without reward with only the reimbursement of allowable expenses and that b) the fee, £750.00, was too large. As treasurer her role was to safeguard the forum's funds, she was opposed to the payment and had withheld it.

Dr Litten made the following statement.

'The strong divergence of opinion between Ms Jenny Perryman, and the chairman and members of the committee over the payment of Wayne Hart for his work on the website, has become an intractable issue for the current committee. Nevertheless, resolution is required and for the

amicable and efficient continued working of the committee, as judged by the majority of its members, it had been suggested to Ms Perryman that she should step down as treasurer. The reason for the fee paid to Wayne Hart for the website work was that it was taking time which would otherwise be expended on his other work – he is self-employed. He had agreed to take on the website and initially no remuneration was discussed. As the work proceeded however it became clear that the task was more time-consuming than he or the steering committee appreciated.

At the January committee meeting, the chairman suggested that he should be paid a contribution to his work on the website and this was agreed by the members present, (which included the treasurer). The sum to be paid was not established because the chairman and Wayne both needed to establish the kind of sum such work could command.

Having discovered that the usual fee was a minimum of £5000, Wayne agreed that this was too high and in discussion with the chairman agreed to do the work for £750. This was reported verbally to the committee at its April meeting – but regrettably NOT recorded, a neglect for which the forum secretary takes full responsibility.

Ms Perryman has refused to make the payment and has continued to do so. To date Wayne Hart has not received one penny of the £750. To maintain financial probity he – Wayne - subsequently lodged an invoice for £500, representing the work completed. Ms Perryman also refused to pay this invoice.

The committee had approved a payment in principle – though not the actual sum – which was agreed subsequently with the chairman by email. The argument is whether or not it is a ‘reasonable expense’. Wayne Hart has – to an extent – resolved the conundrum by retiring from the committee and, thus is no longer a member nor an officer, so he can be paid as would any outside contractor.’

Several members said they were dissatisfied with these events and felt all should have been handled in a far better manner. Several endorsed the fees quoted for websites and said £5000 was at the modest end; they felt a mere £750 was a very good deal. Others questioned whether Ms Perryman had been treated fairly and suggested she should remain in post.

Finally Dr Litten asked for endorsement of his actions and on a show of hands members, by a large majority, supported him. Ms Perryman stood down.

The chairman and committee also undertook to maintain a more formal record of its deliberations to try to eliminate similar confusion in future.

**4) Venues for future meetings.** In an attempt to involve residents of areas of the ward other than the old town/riverside it was agreed that in future meetings would be peripatetic and venues north, east and south of the ward would be sought.