A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 15th December 2014, in the Jubilee Hall, High Street, Heighington, and commenced at 7:30pm.

A representative from the Community Policing Team was in attendance and reported that there were no recorded crimes in Heighington in the period from 11th November 2014 to 15th December 2014. Councillor Webster raised a concern about a car, which is often causing an obstruction on the cul de sac hammer head of Martin Close. This observation was noted by the Police representative for investigation.

There was one member of the public in attendance.

Public forum: The member of the public in attendance expressed concern regarding ongoing issues with buses ‘clashing’ at the junction of Merrycock Lane and the High Street (this issue had also been raised by him during the public forum at the meeting on 17th March 2014). The resident expressed concern that officers of the County Council had not yet provided adequate documentation regarding dialogue with Stagecoach, which had been promised to him at a meeting on 23rd June 2014. Whilst he felt dialogue with the County Council and Stagecoach had been unsatisfactory, he had received a helpful response from PC Coaches and one coach has been re-routed to avoid the junction. The resident confirmed that he had continued his dialogue with the Local Policing Team and had been visited by Sergeant Begley and PC Hanson on 11th December to discuss the ongoing issue of buses clashing at the junction and the safety of pedestrians at the junction. The Chairman thanked the resident for his update but declined a request that an officer of the Parish Council be involved in a further meeting to discuss the ongoing issues highlighted above. The Chairman pointed out that the Parish Council does not in fact have powers that can address the issues highlighted, which sit firmly with the County Council. (The County Council has installed a parking restriction at the junction and is currently pursuing a weight restriction to address the movement of HGVs, but not buses.)

Present: Councillor C. J. Dunning - Chairman
Councillor B. Webster
Councillor D. Chantler
Councillor N. Briscoe
Councillor R. Burgess
Councillor G. Brennand
Councillor S. Gilbert
Councillor J. R. Dziadkiewicz
Clerk N. Eyre

Also District Councillor M. Brighton OBE.

Councillor Dunning, as Chairman, opened the meeting with a welcome to those present.

133/M/14 Apologies, Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Sargent, Puncher and Shipston, which were agreed. Apologies for absence had also been received from District Councillor I. Carrington and District and County Councillor R. Oxby.

Councillor Briscoe declared a pecuniary interest in respect of this Council’s consideration of the Post Office consultation relating to a proposed move of the local Post Office branch and branch modernisation (see minute 141/M/14).

Councillor Gilbert declared a pecuniary interest in respect of the planning application to raise the roof height to create a loft conversion at Royal Cottage, Merrycock Lane, Heighington (see minute 148/M/14).

Members were reminded that dispensations in respect of setting the precept had already been
agreed on 16th December 2013 and will endure until 31st March 2015.

134/M/14  To approve Clerk's Notes
Draft notes from the meeting of the Parish Council on 10th November 2014 were taken as read and approved as minutes. Draft notes from the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 8th December 2014 were received for information.

135/M/14  Clerk's Report
The Clerk reported as follows:

- An interim internal audit was conducted by Mr Parkes on 17th November 2014 with no issues being highlighted for the attention of Members. The auditor's brief report was circulated at this meeting.
- Work on the footpaths adjacent to the new railway underpass was brought forwards in an attempt to make them available during the Christmas holidays. This work is nearing completion.
- Lincolnshire County Council has confirmed its intention to remove a section of hedge on Sheepwash Lane, Heighington to improve visibility for pedestrians crossing the road. That work is scheduled for the period 22nd to 23rd December 2014 (weather permitting).
- The Cover Girls will perform again at the Jubilee Hall on Sunday 21st December 2014 with a set of songs from the 1940’s and 1950’s and some festive songs. The Clerk requested donations of mince pies and biscuits. Donations for refreshments at this event will be towards the local village charity, the Heighington Village Association.
- Completed documentation sought in respect of the Community Buildings in Heighington has been received by the Clerk. Responses from the Village Hall Management Trustees, North Kesteven District Council and Garrett's Charity will be combined with information from this Council and will inform the development of a long term community buildings strategy for the village.
- Delivery of the interactive speed indicating sign is imminent. Initially the sign will be installed on Washingborough Road. The rota for moving the sign from location to location will need to be in place by end January 2015.
- The Clerk has secured outline agreement from WAG Screen to show the film “Tell Them Of Us” (which is about the Lincolnshire based Crowder family during World War One) as part of the Annual Parish Meeting on 13th April 2015. This film has been extremely well received locally following showings in Lincoln and Horncastle.

136/M/14  Correspondence
The read file for information and Member's perusal was noted. Members noted the proposal to meet with Washingborough Parish Council and the Washingborough and Heighington Parochial Church Council in respect of the diminishing availability of grave spaces at St. John’s in Washingborough. Given imminent work on the precept, and recognising that some documentation about a previous search for grave sites needs to be reviewed, it is suggested that any joint meeting be held in February or March 2015. The Clerk was asked to make that suggestion to the other parties. Separately, the Chairman expressed thanks to Councillors Chantler and Burgess for their reports (regarding Canwick road improvements and a proposed wind farm at Nocton Fen), which had been circulated as part of the pack for this meeting.

137/M/14  Correspondence (Police Reports)
Members agreed that it would be useful if reports from the Local Policing Team could be presented in discrete calendar months rather than covering the period between meetings. The Clerk was asked to explore the feasibility of this proposal with the Local Policing Team.

138/M/14  Reports from District Councillor
District Councillor M. Brighton OBE reported as follows:
- The District Council is pleased to have negotiated the provision of free heat from the Eco2 power station in Sleaford for a period of 25 years. The surplus heat is being provided to local public facilities, including Council offices, a swimming pool and a nearby school.
There is a commitment to spend in excess of £3m updating the North Kesteven Sports Centre in North Hykeham during 2015. Initial indications, based upon tenders received, are that the full refurbishment will be achievable within the available budget.

A new District Council depot is being developed in Metheringham, which will be sited away from local housing to address concerns about noise.

There has been a good response to the consultation about the Draft Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. Around 3000 responses were received during the initial consultation, which closed in November 2014.

139/M/14 To review the status of funding for the Have My Say play equipment for young people and teenagers.

Members were delighted to hear that the grant application for £17,772 from WREN had been successful against intense competition. Various administrative matters need to be attended to before the grant contract will be produced by WREN. These matters are in hand with the Clerk, Facilities Manager and Councillor Dunning.

140/M/14 Heighington Have My Say Recreational Equipment. To authorise the Clerk to sign the WREN Funding Agreement on behalf of the Council.

It was resolved that the Clerk is hereby authorised to sign the WREN Funding Agreement in respect of the Have My Say Recreational Equipment on behalf of Heighington Parish Council. It was resolved that the Clerk is hereby authorised to take any other necessary actions on behalf of Heighington Parish Council in respect of matters associated with securing the grant funds from WREN and Lincolnshire County Council for the Have My Say Recreational Equipment project. Further to minute 192/M/13, it was resolved that Councillors Dunning and Chantler shall authorise all necessary expenditure in respect of this project.

Councillor Briscoe left the room at this point and did not participate in the discussion relating to minute 141/M/14.

141/M/14 To consider whether this Council wishes to make any comments to the Post Office as part of the public consultation in respect of the proposed local branch move to new premises and modernisation. The consultation closes on 12th January 2015.

It was resolved that this Council comments as follows: “The proposed change is not welcomed by Heighington Parish Council. The major modernisation programme adopted by the Post Office is imposing a change, which has not been sought locally and which may have a detrimental impact upon the viability of an important local business. However, the Council notes that Post Office counter services will be maintained in the village, which is clearly very important for the local community. Provided that the future local Post Office counter service actually delivered is entirely as set out in the letter of 18th November 2014 (i.e. in respect of services offered, extended opening hours and disabled access) the Council does not object to the proposed change. The Council does however have the following specific concerns about the quality of future service delivery, which need to be addressed:

1) We understand that there will be no dedicated Post Office counter. We are concerned about queuing times in the revised mode of operation. The Spar is already a busy shop with just two tills. Staffing levels in the shop dictate that these tills are frequently unmanned, which already causes queues.

2) We are concerned about the level of confidentiality and expertise to be offered at the counter. Are all shop staff going to be appropriately trained?

3) Whilst the Spar is located just 80 metres from the current branch, the High Street is significantly narrower at this point and we are concerned about the impact upon parking in an area, which is already very congested. This already causes issues, particularly for HGV deliveries to the Spar.

4) We understand that stamp booklets may be limited to 12 stamps. Some business users in the village currently purchase stamps in books of 100 stamps. Why is this important facility
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unavailable? We want to encourage business and enterprise within the village, not drive it away.”

Councillor Briscoe returned to the room at this point and rejoined the meeting.

142/M/14 To approve the monthly financial statement for November 2014.
The monthly financial statement for November 2014 was approved and Councillor Chantler initialled the accounts statement and the bank statements accordingly.

143/M/14 Expenditure in respect of fencing to protect the cricket pitch
In the period since the last meeting it was brought to the attention of the Clerk that vehicles were being driven across the cricket pitch so that parents could watch youngsters playing football on the lower field off Potterhanworth Road from the comfort of their car. Our grounds contractor pointed out that such traffic in the event of wetter ground would cause serious damage to the cricket pitch, which would be extremely expensive to repair. Consequently, in accordance with Clause 4.5 of the Financial Regulations, the Clerk authorised expenditure of £13.30 excluding VAT to purchase some wooden stakes. These stakes have been driven into the ground and roped together to prevent vehicles crossing the cricket pitch. It was resolved that this expenditure was appropriate and Members thanked the Clerk and the grounds contractor for their prompt action.

144/M/14 Meeting to confirm the Council precept for 2015/2016
Members noted that North Kesteven District Council will not confirm matters impacting upon the precept for this Council until Thursday 29th January 2015. As the precept demand needs to be completed, authorised and sent to North Kesteven District Council by Thursday 5th February 2015, it was resolved that the next meeting of this Council will be on Monday 2nd February 2015 (and not on Monday 26th January 2015 as previously proposed).

145/M/14 To consider a proposed revision of the Financial Regulations of the Council.
Members noted that a revised model of Financial Regulations for Local Councils had been issued by the National Association of Local Councils on 3rd October 2014. This revision is primarily in respect of the repeal of S.150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, although some minor editing errors were also corrected. A revised draft of the Financial Regulations for this Council was presented at this meeting. The Policy and Resources Committee had recommended that this Council adopts those amended regulations as presented (see minute 013/R/14). It was resolved that the amended Financial Regulations be adopted.

146/M/14 Tree work applications for Members consultative comments.
One tree work application has been received in respect of works at 71 High Street (crown lift medium sized acer and reduce adjacent hedge line to a height of 1.5m). It was resolved that these proposed works be left at the discretion of the Tree Officer at North Kesteven District Council.

147/M/14 Tree work decision notices received from North Kesteven District Council.
Members noted that various proposed works at (1) The Granary, High Street (2) 6 High Street, (3) 60 High Street and (4) Station Road Recreation Ground had all been approved.

Councillor Gilbert left the room at this point and did not participate in the discussion relating to minute 148/M/14.

148/M/14 Planning Application 14/1527/HOUS, to raise the roof height to create a loft conversion, Royal Cottage, Merrycock Lane, Heighington (Amended).
Members noted the amended plans, which no longer have roof lights on the front elevation, as requested by the Conservation Officer of North Kesteven District Council. It was resolved that this Council has no comments to make in respect of this application.

Councillor Gilbert returned to the room at this point and rejoined the meeting.
There were no planning decision notices to report at this meeting.

The Chairman moved that the remainder of the business is held in ‘committee’ and that the public and press be excluded there from for reason that the business to be transacted or advice tendered is that of a confidential nature, which could be prejudicial to the public interest to publicise. Members resolved to proceed on that basis, ‘in committee’ and District Councillor M. Brighton left the meeting at this point.

The meeting ended at approximately 21:15.

Signed: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________