

# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN BEETLEY VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 4 APRIL 2013

**Present;** Councillor A Leigh (Chair)  
Councillor R Richmond  
Councillor J Baldwin  
Councillor M Rose  
Councillor J O'Donovan  
Councillor J Mayhew

County Councillor M Kiddle Morris  
District Councillor R Duffield

7 members of the public

## **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Councillor A Fox, Adam Luck, Jake Luck and Gary Hinchliffe.

## **Minutes of the last Meeting**

Councillor Richmond proposed and Councillor Rose seconded the resolution that these be adopted.

All were in favour.

## **Chairman's introduction and report.**

WELCOME TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.

DURING THE PAST YEAR WE RECEIVED THE RESIGNATION FROM ADAM LUCK WHO WAS VICE CHAIRMAN AND A LONG STANDING AND CONSCIENCTIOUS PARISH COUNCILLOR. HE RESIGNED SO THAT HE WAS ABLE TO CONCENTRATE ON BEING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BEETLEY VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND HE NOW IS VERY PROACTIVE IN THIS NEW ROLE. ADAM'S REPLACEMENT IS JAMES MAYHEW WHO IS PROVING TO BE AN ACTIVE COUNCILLOR PARTICULARLY WITH THE MONITORING OF BEETLEY RIVER MEADOWS.

PLANNING IS ALWAYS AN ITEM ON THE AGENDA AND 23 PLANNING APPLICATIONS WERE RECEIVED THIS YEAR WHICH IS AN INCREASE OF 6 ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR. ONE OF THESE WENT TO APPEAL WHICH WAS THE PLOT ADJACENT TO 65 FAKENHAM ROAD AND THE APPEAL WAS FORTUNATELY DISMISSED ON HIGHWAY SAFETY GROUNDS TOGETHER WITH IT BEING OUTSIDE OF THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY. THE DECISION OF THE APPEAL, REPORTED IN LAST YEARS REPORT, WAS RECEIVED THIS YEAR. THIS APPEAL WAS UPHOLD FOR THE APPLICATION TO REMOVE THE AGE LIMIT OF 55 FOR BILNEY MEWS. THIS MEANS THAT PEOPLE OF ANY AGE CAN PURCHASE THE PROPERTIES WHICH THE PARISH COUNCIL OBJECTED TO AND **WAS** PREPARED TO LOWER THE AGE LIMIT TO 45 BUT AS WE ALL KNOW UNFORTUNATELY WE CANNOT WIN THEM ALL. THERE WAS ONLY ONE APPLICATION WHICH THE PARISH COUNCIL OBJECTED TO AND BRECKLAND COUNCIL GRANTED PERMISSION. THIS BEING 48 ELMHAM ROAD WHICH THE COUCILORS FELT WAS THE INAPPROPRIATE USE OF GARDEN LAND, AGAIN WE CANNOT WIN THEM ALL. BEETLEY RIVER MEADOWS NOW HAS THE ADDITION OF 2 PICNIC AREAS WHICH WAS JOINT FUNDED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL AND A GRANT OBTAINED FROM BRECKLAND COUNCIL. I AM PERSONALLY PLEASED ABOUT THIS AS IT WAS SOMETHING WHICH I **REALLY FELT** WAS REQUIRED AND I AM POSITIVE THESE AREAS WILL BE APPRECIATED BY ALL AGE GROUPS DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS. THE FUNDING FROM THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING WILL HOPEFULLY BE SECURED THIS YEAR TO MAKE FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO BEETLEY RIVER MEADOWS. I GIVE MY THANKS TO COUNCILLOR ALAN FOX AND COUNCILLOR JAMES MAYHEW FOR THEIR TIME AND INPUT IN MONITORING AND MAINTAINING THIS AREA. THE CONTRACTS FOR THE GRASS CUTTING AND TREE MAINTENANCE WILL REMAIN WITH THE SAME CONTRACTORS THIS YEAR AS THE PAST 2 YEARS. THE CONTRACTORS HAVE PROVIDED A HIGH STANDARD OF WORKMANSHIP AT A COMPETITIVE PRICE

THANKS ARE GIVEN TO THE BEETLEY COMMON ADVISORY COMMITTEE WHO LIAISE CLOSELY WITH THE PARISH COUNCIL IN MAINTAINING BEETLEY COMMON. THEY HAVE CLEARED A LARGE AREA WHICH HAD BECOME OVERGROWN WITH BRACKEN AND FERNS. THIS AREA WILL BE REPLANTED WITH APPROXIMATELY 250 TREES. THE WOODLAND TRUST ARE PROVIDING THESE AT NO CHARGE TO THE PARISH AND NORFOLK WILDLIFE TRUST ARE IN FULL AGREEMENT THAT THIS IS A POSITIVE IMPROVEMENT TO THIS COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE.

BEETLEY PARISH WEBSITE IS STILL BEING MANAGED BY JOHN RELPH AND THANKS ARE GIVEN FOR HIS EXCELLENT MANAGEMENT.

THE BEETLEY BUZZ IS NOW UP TO EDITION 72. MY THANKS TO JULIA THE EDITOR WHO DOES A GRAND JOB IN COLLATING THE INFORMATION. THANKS ALSO GO TO **ALL** OF THE DISTRIBUTORS WHO AT TIMES ARE CARRYING OUT THE HOUSE TO HOUSE DELIVERIES IN INCLEMENT WEATHER, WITHOUT THIS ASSISTANCE THE PARISH WOULD NOT HAVE A NEWSLETTER.

THE BEETLEY PARISH COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME IS A VALUABLE SERVICE FOR PARISHONERS. THANKS ARE GIVEN TO SUE LUDLOW, JOINT CO-ORDINATOR AND **ALL** OF THE DRIVERS FOR THEIR TIME AND DEDICATION. **WITHOUT THESE** VOLUNTEERS THE SCHEME WOULD NOT FUNCTION.

THE MINERALS AND WASTE FRAMEWORK THIS YEAR HAS SLOWLY PROGRESSED. THE PARISH COUNCIL RESPONDED TO THE PRE SUBMISSION CONSULTATION OBJECTING TO THE PROPOSED LARGE SITE, MIN 10, ON FAKENHAM ROAD. THE PUBLIC HEARING TOOK PLACE LAST WEEK, CLARE HEDGES CHAIRMAN OF THE MINERALS AND WASTE SUB COMMITTEE WAS ABLE TO SPEAK AT THIS HEARING AND PUT FORWARD **ALL POINTS** RAISED ABOUT CUMULATIVE IMPACT, LOSS OF AMENITY AND THAT MOST OF THE AGGREGATE WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSUMED AWAY FROM THE SITE. **IT WAS STRESSED** THAT IF THE PARISH IS TO HAVE MINERAL EXTRACTION IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO BE ON THE BILNEY ROAD, MIN 8, 13,51 SITES AND **NOT** ON FAKENHAM ROAD. THE WASTE PART OF THE HEARING WILL BE LATER THIS MONTH. **MY THANKS** TO CLARE FOR HER HARD WORK TOGETHER WITH THANKS TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE SUB COMMITTEE FOR **THEIR TIME AND EFFORT IN TAKING IT FORWARD.**

UNFORTUNATELY THE PARISH PRECEPT HAS HAD TO BE INCREASED THIS YEAR DUE TO ADDITIONAL CHARGES BEING IMPOSED BY BRECKLAND COUNCIL FOR THE COST OF PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS AND CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT SYSTEM. THE PARISH COUNCIL ALSO TOOK INTO ACCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY OF FUNDING BEING WITHDRAWN FROM BRECKLAND COUNCIL FOR THE COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME, THE COST OF THIS IF WITHDRAWN WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY £1000 PER ANNUM.

**FINALLY**, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL COUNCILLORS FOR THEIR **ASSISTANCE AND TIME** THEY HAVE GIVEN TO ME AND THE PARISH OVER THE PAST YEAR IN MAKING BEETLEY PARISH COUNCIL **A PRO-ACTIVE COUNCIL**. THANKS ALSO TO THE PARISH CLERK FOR HIS DEDICATION AND CONSCIENTIOUS WORK. **WE ARE AN EXCELLENT TEAM AND I KNOW** WE WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN BEETLEY PARISH IN THE FORTHCOMING YEAR.

### Community Car Scheme.

I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT THE COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME CONTINUES TO BE A VALUABLE SCHEME FOR THE PARISH.

HAVING 2 CO-ORDINATORS SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING THAT THE REQUESTS FOR JOURNEYS ARE FORFILLED WORKS VERY WELL. HAVING A MOBILE PHONE NUMBER FOR PARISHONERS TO CONTACT THE CO-ORDINATOR WHEN REQUESTING A JOURNEY HAS PROVEN TO BE A SUCCESS AND THERE HAS BEEN NO COMPLAINTS REGARDING CALLS HAVING TO BE MADE TO A MOBILE, WHICH WAS A CONCERN WHEN IT WAS DECIDED TO USE IT AS THE CONTACT NUMBER.

THERE ARE NOW 11 DRIVERS WHICH IS AN INCREASE OF 2 SINCE LAST YEAR. THIS WAS REQUIRED TO MEET THE HEAVY DEMAND FOR JOURNEYS WHICH IS EXPERIENCED FROM TIME TO TIME PARTICULARLY DURING THE FLU INJECTION SEASON AND ALSO WHEN A PARISHONER HAS THE NEED TO MAKE DAILY VISITS TO THE HOSPITAL FOR SEVERAL CONSECUTIVE WEEKS WHEN A RELATIVE OR FRIEND IS VERY ILL.

THE WINTER MONTHS WHERE A CHALLENGE THIS YEAR DUE TO THE SEVERITY OF THE WEATHER BUT THE DRIVERS WHERE BRILLIANT IN COVERING ALL OF THE REQUESTS FOR JOURNEYS NO MATTER WHAT THE ROAD CONDITIONS WHERE WHICH PROVES HOW DEDICATED THEY ARE . IT WAS VERY HEARTNING TO READ THE COMPLIANTARY COMMENTS CONCERNING THE SCHEME AND DRIVERSWHICH WHERE PUBLISHED IN THE BEETLEY BUZZ PARISH NEWSLETTER BY THOSE WHO USE THE SCHEME. THIS REALLY CONFIRMS THAT THE SCHEME IS APPRECIATED AND IS ESSENSIAL FOR THE PARISH.

THE TOTAL MILES COVERED BETWEEN APRIL 2012 AND MARCH 2013 WAS 7333 WHICH IS AN INCREASE ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR BY NEARLY 800. THE NUMBER OF JOURNEYS MADE WAS 335 AN INCREASE OF 64 ON LAST YEAR. THE CO-ORDINATORS AND DRIVERS ARE AWARE THAT BRECKLAND COUNCIL ARE STILL CONSIDERING WHETHER TO WITHDRAW THEIR FUNDING TO COMMUNITY CAR SCHEMES AND HOPE THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL WOULD FULLY FUND THE SCHEM E IF BRECKLAND COUNCIL DID DECIDE TO WITHDRAW THEIR CONTRIBUTION.

### **Village Hall Report.**

### **BEETLEY & EAST BILNEY VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

#### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – 2013

We are very pleased to announce that we have been successful in obtaining a Community Construction Grant towards the refurbishment of the Village Hall.

The work will include:

- Insulation of the building;
- Renewal and repositioning of the boiler and oil tank;
- Provision of 2 storage rooms;
- Disabled access to the reception area and a disabled toilet;
- Enlargement and refurbishment of the kitchen; and
- Refurbishment of the parquet flooring.

We are sure this will lead to improved oil security and reduced running costs.

We would like to give our special thanks to County Councillor Mark Kiddle-Morris for sponsoring our application and to Mr George Hayes for his contribution in acting as our Independent local referee. It would not have been possible without them.

We will endeavour to minimise disruption to our users while this work is carried out.

Over the past year we have been very lucky to attract a further 4 members to our committee. The present members include Adam and Jake Luck, Kevin Foran, Gary Hinchliffe, Frank Haverson, June Overall, Alan Fox, Joanne Baldwin and Jane Eglington, who are prepared to serve a further year.

Our Christmas Event in December was well-supported by our usual group of local residents and raised the sum of £590 towards our Refurbishment Fund.

We have carried out various maintenance work over the year, including replacement of the wash handbasins in the toilet areas, and replacement of a manhole cover in the parking area.

We would like to thank the Parish Council for their donation to cover the village hall insurance and the 2012 mowing contract for the playing field. Earlier in the year, we had been told that responsibility for the playing field area would pass from the parish council to the village hall committee. The village hall members acknowledged that this additional expense would need to be taken on board. We were then very pleased to hear that the parish council would endeavour to continue financial support in the future.

Unfortunately, the change in responsibility regarding the playing field came about after a questionnaire had been distributed to residents by the Parish Council, and before the Village

Hall Committee were able to consider the implication of maintaining and insuring any new equipment.

We have since explained to the parish council our concern about the security and safety of any equipment on the Playing Field. We pointed out, for example, that damage to the cricket nets had occurred very soon after their installation. Over the years the most vandal-proof outdoor lighting available at the time had been installed but this had suffered damage, as had the double garage. In the recent past, a storage hut and bench were so badly vandalised and damaged that they had to be dismantled.

The usually-welcomed seclusion of the village hall and playing field site works against security, as evidenced by the oil thefts. We have also had a number of police-recorded late night incidents on the car park which have, at times, resulted in damage and large amounts of litter. We therefore felt that, at this time, it would be irresponsible to install new equipment in such a secluded and vulnerable area.

On a personal level, I would like to express my thanks to our committee members for their hard work and support, and to Vera Fox, who, we are very pleased to report, has become our 'pot planter and carer'.

Adam Luck  
April 2013

### **County Councillor Report.**

The report was presented by County Councillor M Kiddle Morris.

### **Norfolk County Councillor for Necton and Launditch Division** **Annual Report – 2012/2013.**

The past year has seen work continuing on making the Council more efficient to balance the books in light of changes to the way central government funds local Councils. Through efficiencies and redesign of services the Council has managed to save £135m from the annual budget while protecting core services such as adult social services, childrens services, libraries, the fire and rescue service, recycling centres, highway maintenance and our museums. The Council has however managed to keep tax levels down and 2013/14 will be the third year that there has been no rise in the County Council share of council tax.

“The Big Conversation” of 2010/11 identified those services that the majority of the public valued and the County council has prioritised those wishes. In addition the following projects have come to fruition over the last year:

- The Norfolk Community Construction Fund has provided £4.5m this year and next to supply grants for community projects and has helped parish councils and other village organisations to improve facilities in their communities.
- The “Better Broadband” campaign has secured £15m from central government and been matched by the County Council allowing a £30m contract to be signed with BT to provide at least 2Mb broadband speeds to 99% of Norfolk by 2015.
- A new £1m recycling centre has been opened in Dereham.
- Allocated £2m this year and next to fund local highway improvements requested by parish councils. The parish council contribution has been reduced from 50% to 25% of the total cost for next year and in retrospect for last years completed projects.
- £3.5m has been invested to support 500 apprentice placements to help young people into work and to provide an increased skill base to aid economic recovery.
- Norfolk spends £14m each year providing the library service and we have made some changes to the way we operate the libraries to ensure they remain open. The Norwich Millennium Library is the most used library in the country with 1.3m visitors.

Better road and rail communication links with London and the Midland have always been seen as vital to the economic wellbeing of Norfolk. The long running campaign to have the A11 dualled has at last met with success and will undoubtedly attract investment in Norfolk

along the A11 corridor. However, the A47 link from the Midlands is probably of more importance and the economic benefits of a dualled A47 to the majority of Norfolk between Kings Lynn and Yarmouth would be enormous; the campaign for this improvement is being led by the County Council. Vital investment in the track between Kings Lynn and London has been secured allowing better capacity shorter journey times after a successful campaign by the County Council and local MP's.

Highway maintenance and winter route clearance have always been high on any agenda at parish council meetings and of concern to residents. In the past year over £2m of extra money has been put into summer road maintenance to repair the trouble caused by the really cold weather over the last few winters in 2012 we spent some £44m in maintaining Norfolk's roads. Gritting of roads during frosty and snowy weather has caused some concerns to residents as to why "their road" is not gritted. Each settlement is provided with one gritted route (not always the most convenient) to the nearest main access route, each operation to grit these priority one routes costs in excess of £45k and these are sometimes done twice in 24h. Therefore there is little room, in budget terms, to increase the length of any gritted route.

In all it has been a challenging year for Norfolk County Council which has seen a careful reduction in budget requirements which has produced an under spend from the requirements forecast allowing some of the surplus to be put to projects as outlined earlier. With good financial management over the next year I am positive that we can maintain the services we provide to the people of Norfolk and provide the stimulus to the local economy that will encourage the provision of meaningful jobs when the economy grows in the future.

Elections take place on May 2<sup>nd</sup> this year to elect a new Council.

### **District Councillor Report**

District Councillor R Duffield reported that there are financial constraints on Breckland Council and that it had consulted the public on the services that they wished it to maintain. There will be no charges for car parking. The Boundary Commission is at present looking at the number of Councillors within Breckland and Breckland Council has proposed a reduction from 54 to 50 which will mean amendments to Ward members. Planning is always a problem and whilst there has been some success there has not been as much as he would like.

### **Club Reports**

#### **Football**

The Clerk read out the report from Jake Luck.

This season is closing with a hectic schedule of games in the forthcoming weeks. Some decent cup runs earlier in the season and the unusually high number of postponed games due to the weather has left the team with ten league games still to play in the closing weeks. The team has played well so far this season and have only lost three of the fourteen league games they have played. They will be hoping to maintain this form in the remainder of the season and become one of the five teams being promoted from division 4 of the Central & S. Norfolk League.

#### **Cricket**

The Clerk read out the report from Gary Hinchliffe.

The 2012 season proved to be both difficult and frustrating for 2 reasons. Difficult in that key members of the team sustained long term injuries and this coupled with a retirement made getting a team together difficult and in some games we were not competitive. The season was frustrating due to the miserable summer that we all endured. The season usually starts at the beginning of May and we did not play our first game until the last weekend in May. Despite these difficulties we managed to finish just below mid table in division 3 of the West Norfolk League, which was a very creditable performance.

Early signs for the 2013 season are promising (well apart from the weather). We have completed indoor nets and have attracted a few new players to the club. We will be playing in Division 4 next season. Not because of where we finished last year but due to some league

rule. We are unhappy with this and may be looking at playing in another league for the 2014 season.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Beetley Scout Group.**

Colin Fisher presented the report on behalf of the Scout Group.

The Scout Group continues to thrive. There are 75 members in three age groups with 6 warranted leaders and 3 helpers. All groups are very active. The Beavers, 6-8 years have visited Duxford Imperial War Museum, The Cubs have held an activity weekend and the Scouts are going on their summer camp to Derbyshire.

The big feature of the year has been the extension to the headquarters. This had to stop as the money was exhausted but a new grant of £7000 has been secured which will enable this to be completed. The site is becoming more popular locally and it is expected that more bookings will be made by other organisations once the showers are completed.

#### **Open Forum**

Mr Atterwill stated that a CCTV system could be installed at the Village Hall as it had been at Swanton Morley which could be accessed remotely. This would cost about £2000 which could be repaid over three years.

A parishioner asked why there was no play equipment at the Village Hall. It was explained that some of the equipment had been removed for safety reasons and it had not been possible to agree with the Village Hall Committee the long term maintenance of new equipment.

The meeting closed at 1940