

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN BEETLEY VILLAGE HALL ON FRIDAY 18TH MAY 20076

Present; Councillor R Richmond (Chair)
Councillor A Leigh
Councillor R Campbell-Smith
Councillor G Hayes
Councillor A Luck
Councillor M Petzer
Councillor D Silk

Two Parishioners

Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from County Councillor C Lloyd-Owen, District Councillor R Duffield and Mrs J Overall.

Minutes of the previous meeting.

Councillor Hayes proposed and Councillor Leigh seconded the proposition that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record. All were in favour. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

Chairman's introduction and report.

Welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting for Beetley Parish Council and can I thank you all for attending this evening.

For those of you who don't know me my name is Robert Richmond and I have just completed my first year as the Chairman of the Parish Council. I followed Gerge Hayes who had served for six years.

You should all have copies of the agenda which you'll see has our standard items plus a special item covering the history of Beetley Meadows Play Area. You will also have a chance to raise any issues you have for further discussion in the Open Forum.

There are various members of the Council here this evening so feel free to talk to myself or them afterwards if you don't want to raise anything in the main meeting.

I would like to thank Bryan Leigh who has served as Clerk for one year which I hope you have found rewarding and interesting. Michelle Petzer came to the last Annual parish Meeting and was subsequently co-opted onto the Parish Council.

Well, onto my report for the year.

It's been another busy year with a combination of our normal business and some special items and projects. We have repaired the fencing at Beetley Meadows

As you may be aware we introduced a system of Portfolio holders for each Councillor which has continued to work well ensuring we make progress and keep track of the Action Plan developed from the Parish Plan.

For the record I would like to confirm that the Parish precept has seen a relatively nominal increase of £500 which works out to about 15p per household per annum.

Finally I would like to thank all the Councillors for their dedication and hard work during the year and the support given to me. On 19th May we presented Bill Barker with a tree plaque to be erected next to the tree in respect of his long association with the village and services provided over many years. It is with sadness that I have to report the passing away of Bill Smith the Community Car Coordinator. The Parish council was represented at the funeral by the Clerk.

Action Plan Updates.

Planning and Affordable Housing.

Planning continues to have its problems and takes much of the time of the Council. Affordable Housing has been stuck as no suitable site has been found that is acceptable to the planning department.

Communications.

The Parish Newsletter "The Beetley Buzz" was launched in 2006 shortly after last year's Annual Meeting thanks to the efforts of June Overall originally, which was then taken on and further developed by Angela Leigh.

This is now prepared and distributed monthly with a wide range of useful information for parishioners going to nearly all households in the village. It also contains an extract from the Parish council meetings.

Feedback overall has been very positive.

Contributions are always welcome for future publication which can be sent to Bryan Leigh.

Environment.

Replacement of trees had been done at East Bilney Town lands and the site is managed to ensure that the trees have a good chance of growing. This year it is hoped the Beetley Meadows area will be improved. Footpaths are always a concern and the parish is indebted to the local landowners who cut and maintain them.

Transport: Only eight replies had been received from the questionnaire about transport for Beetley and it had not been possible to take this forward.

Planning: The Chairman had covered all the main points in his report although the parish council is still disappointed with some of the decisions of Breckland Council.

Affordable Housing: The survey carried out had proved that there is a need in the village for 6-8 affordable homes. 2 sites have been identified on High House Road and Breckland Council are looking at the plans. There is no funding for another two years and a site and planning permission are needed before further progress can be made.

Community Car Scheme.

June Overall reported that 1817 miles had been covered in the year and 118 passengers carried. Since 1991 72655 miles had been made by the scheme and the total number of passengers carried was 3,326.

Mr Bill Smith, the organiser, had to curtail his participation last summer. He had tried, unsuccessfully, for some time to find at least one more driver. As his fall back for local journeys when needed, I did manage to cover the local journeys when needed during his absence.

Mr Smith will not be able to continue as organiser and so a determined effort has been made to increase the bank of drivers. Up to now Mr & Mrs Scott, Mrs Dark, Mr Monaghan, Mrs Richmond and Mr Hill have been enlisted. The aim is to share the work between as many drivers as possible so that we can be confident of delivering the service.

I am grateful to those who have agreed to drive and to those who have helped with identifying possible drivers. More drivers would be appreciated.

As few people in Beetley take Link-up, the parish magazine, I would like to house drop residences within the Parish as I know many are not aware of the service-but I felt this could not be done until the drivers were available.

In November last year Breckland Council raised the car mileage rate from 36p to 40p. This will slightly raise the fixed fares to passengers, and the mileage rate for other journeys from 18p to 20p per mile.

Village Hall Report

Stephen Pope the Acting chairman presented the report.

My thanks to the Village Hall Committee, in particular David and Pauline silk the outgoing Chairman and Bookings Secretary. Other committee members recently retired are Mrs Aileen Clarke and Ms Brenda Mann. My thanks to all of them for the hard work they have put in making the Village Hall the success it is.

The refurbishment of the hall has progressed this year. The roof has been completed and the disabled ramp installed. The interior decorating has been completed and we have received a number of compliments as to how nice the hall looks and this has led to increased bookings. New notice boards have been erected in the lobby.

During the year a house leaflet drop was carried out in the Parish to let people know the improvements that had been made to the hall. In addition an open day was held on Sunday 19 February 2006.

The Friends and Neighbours Club have purchased a window for the Village Hall to commemorate their 50th Anniversary.

Regular users of the hall include:

Dog Obedience classes
Line dancing
Carpet Bowls
Wood Turners
Table Tennis
Women's Institute
Friends and Neighbours Club
Art Classes

Current committee members all prepared to stand for next year are:

Mrs Joyce Jordan
Mrs Brenda Vickers
Mr Jake Luck
Mrs Heather Roberson
Mrs June Overall
Mr Stephen Pope
Mrs Ann Pope
Mr Adam Luck

It was propose by Councillor Richmond and seconded by Mr Bloy that the committee be re-elected. All were in favour.

The accounts were circulated which showed a balance in the bank accounts of £2407.26.

Club Reports

Football

The 2005/2006 season had been disappointing having played 30 and lost 30. Hopefully the new season will be a better one.

Cricket

The Club again competed in the west Norfolk League Division 3 (there are 5 divisions). Again player numbers were difficult but through hard work and arm twisting we always managed to field 11 albeit of very differing standards|||... and ages.

The season was generally successful with the club finishing in a very creditable 4th position (out of 10) and for the first time in many years we competed in the League evening knock out cup... although we did not get very far.

Off the field finances continue to be a struggle and we are still trying to keep very valuable machinery in the lock up garage without a roof||| equally the state of the changing rooms

caused numerous problems and we had a fair amount of equipment stolen due to the total lack of security offered by the doors|| I attended a meeting last summer regarding this and was advised that the Parish Council would look into this, but to date nothing has happened. I have asked a local tradesman (who I have used personally) to give a quote for replacement doors/windows and this will be made available to the Parish Council.
All in all a successful season and we have already started the new season with one win and one loss and it would seem we have recruited a few new players although we still only have 2 players living in the village.

Table Tennis

The team is in Division 1, 3 people play 2 from Beetley and 1 from Hoe. It has been a reasonable season finishing halfway in the league.

Carpet Bowls

The club is still functioning and meets weekly. They have increased membership during the year.

The Norfolk Woodturners wish to thank the Village Hall Committee as they are so pleased with the facilities they now have every meeting there and are grateful that the stove lathe can be stored at the hall.

Beetley Meadows

A lengthy discussion ensued about the way forward for the play area with suggestions being that the Parish Council do some and the local residents take ownership to keep clean and tidy and to raise funds. It is anticipated that to fully refurbish the site would cost about £5000 and external funding may be available. It was hoped that any acts of vandalism or damage would be reported to the Parish Council so that remedial action could be taken. It was suggested that the school be approached to help as part of their community links.

Beetley Newsletter

The winner of the competition to name the newsletter was Mrs Pilgrim who suggested the Beetley Buzz. The winner was decided by the meeting.

District Council Report

District Councillor Duffield reported that most controversial planning applications have letters written about them. 90% of the applications are decided by the Officers. The time that the Council has to determine the applications is very short and dictated by the government who can override the LDF. The concentration for housing is Watton, Thetford, Attleborough, and Dereham. Planning guidelines mean that some have to be passed although the Parish Council objects. New Government policy has been pushed through but the main proponent of this in the Government has been sidelined.

Open Forum

Concern was expressed about the state of the footpath at Beetley Meadows. It was confirmed that after a request from a parishioner the photographs are being re-framed and will be replaced on the walls at the village hall.

The meeting closed at 2104

