

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR ELECTORS OF TOCKWITH, COWTHORPE AND WILSTROP

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 20th April 2005 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Chairman: Councillor M Kennett (Chairman of the Parish Council)

In attendance: Parish Cllrs. Mrs Wardman, C Saunders, M Smith, P Pick, N Waller, W J Bowyer, C Billenness Mrs J Bygate (Internal Auditor), Parish Clerk Mrs G Firth, 2 members of the public.

1. Chairman's Report (Cllr Kennett)

Chairman's report to the Annual Parish Meeting Wednesday 20th April 2005

I would like to record my thanks to Gill Firth our Parish Clerk for all that she does for the council. Thanks also to Janet Bygate, our Internal Auditor, to Julian Sturdy our District Cllr and to John Savage our County Cllr.

They are all people who work hard for us in the background and we could not operate without them.

Thank you too to all the Parish Cllrs on this Council. I know that you often only get the hassle from parishioners who don't realise what you can and cannot do about a situation. Thank you for all the hard work you have done for the Council both on this Council and representing us on other bodies and at other meetings.

Again we have got through a lot of business, certainly more than most Parish Councils.

Many planning applications have passed through our hands again this year and the Council has dealt with these by consulting with local residents and taking a view on the response they should make to the planning authority based upon local concerns and planning policy.

We are very pleased in the way that the Village Hall Committee have taken the running of the Hall on board and are doing very well. We support their vision and approach to this building, which is one of the assets of the Council.

Thank you to Norman and Jackie for keeping an eye on the Marston Road Playground. It is good to see it well used.

We are planning the use of a field adjacent to the Sportsfield for local community use.

We are still trying to acquire a piece of land in Cowthorpe, which will be for the benefit of all parishioners.

Thanks once again for all you have done.

Lets hope that next year is a successful year for the Parish Council and consequently for the parishes of Tockwith, Cowthorpe and Wilstrop.

2.1 Report by Village Hall Committee representative (Cllr Lake)

In the absence, on business, of Cllr Lake the Clerk made known an e mail detailing the main points

of interest :- redecoration, new kitchen, CCTV and resurfacing of the floor.

The draft Lease and Deed of Trust are with the Solicitor after which they will be put before the VHMC and Parish Council for agreement and ratification. The next stage will be to agree a schedule of dilapidations, to be back-dated from the date of the Lease less any items which have been funded by the Parish Council.

2.2 Sportsfield Trust Committee representative (Cllr Billenness)

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2004 has seen further progress on the creation of the Junior Football Pitch at the Sportsfield.

The field has now been sprayed and levelling, drainage and sowing is currently planned to take place at the end of May. This will enable the field to start to be used in September 2006. The Trustees wish to express their thanks to the Parish Council for their support in obtaining Section 106 funding towards this facility.

The Tennis Club has a new Committee, who have been very busy in maintaining the courts.

They have repaired wind damage to the surrounding fences and have resprayed and re-marked the courts, greatly improving the playing surfaces. The courts are still used at weekends for youth tennis coaching.

The Trust has an arrangement with the Scouts to allow them to use the toilets and showers when they camp on the adjoining parish field.

There is a continuing focus on fundraising to cover the costs of general maintenance of the buildings and pitches. This is being supported by an increasing number of casual rentals of the upstairs room for parties. There are also now more bands using the room to practice.

Finally, I am happy to report that one of the Saturday Football Clubs is now 5 points in the lead at the top of the second division of the York League, having been promoted from the third division last year. I am sure Cllrs will all join me in wishing them all success for the last two games of the season and hope that their success will continue.

2.3 Report by WARDEN representative (Wetherby Area Rural District Environment & Nature Group) (Cllr Bowyer)

There have been two meetings of WARDEN during the year but much business has been conducted by members using mail, e mail and telephone.

Over £50,000 has been raised and, although the accounts are not yet to hand, it is clear that much of it has been spent employing consultants and counsel to represent WARDEN at the Public Inquiry held in connection with the proposal to build 1500 homes and ancillary services on Thorp Arch Business Park.

In addition WARDEN successfully opposed the proposal to erect houses next to Martin House Children's Hospice at Boston Spa and it supported Tockwith in its opposition to the siting of a Waste Chemical Transfer Station on Marston Moor Business Park.

The future of WARDEN is at present in question as David Gawthorpe, who has been Chairman and Secretary for the 17 years of its existence, is ill and has been advised to stand down. The position will

be reviewed at the AGM in June and it has been suggested that the Chairmen of the 10 Councils concerned be invited along with their representatives.

I shall keep the Council informed of all future developments.

2.4 Report by Ainsty Conservation Society representative (Cllr Mrs Wardman)

Sandhole Wood

The tree canopy of the wood is gradually extending, particularly at the eastern end.

Spraying continues to control pernicious weeds eg the infamous Japanese knotweed.

Maintenance work has also continued, recently involving felling some trees and ring backing others to achieve fallen deadwood and standing deadwood respectively for the benefit of wildlife.

Work has also begun to cut back the hedges to separate them from the growing trees.

It is hoped to have a survey of bird life in the next couple of months and, in accordance with the Society's remit, involvement with the local school and other groups is to be encouraged.

Future plans include consideration to be given to the provision of a circular path round the reserve in addition to the existing central path.

2.5 Report by Youth Club representative (Cllr Mrs Wardman)

In conjunction with the Youth Club Leader a report is to be prepared for the May meeting.

2.6 Report by School Governor (Cllr Saunders)

Under the re-organisation of the Tockwith School Governing body during 2004, I moved from the position of Community Governor to that of Governor representing the Parish Council.

As Governor I serve on the Finance and Health & Safety Committees.

I am the link Governor for Science. I am also responsible for overseeing the school drug policy.

During the last year I have attended a number of classes to monitor progress and I have also accompanied classes on two educational outings.

It has been a busy and progressive year for the school. We have had our first overseas teacher exchange with an Australian teacher and it is currently going very well.

Work has started on the school classroom extensions and is currently ahead of time and is due

for completion during the summer.

Negotiations have started on the upgrading of the IT equipment so that the school continues to benefit from the new technologies available.

The school is currently in the middle of an Ofsted inspection and feedback will be presented to Governors at the end of the month. All indications are that the inspection is going well.

The Health & Safety Committee is about to undertake an internal asbestos audit, which will be reported on next year.

The school continues to maintain its high standard of excellence under the leadership of Mrs Lumley, the Head Teacher.

The Governing body, ably chaired by Cllr Waller, remains challenging and focussed on ensuring that Tockwith Primary School continues to be a top educational facility.

2.7 YLCA representative at Harrogate Branch meetings (Cllr Bowyer)

There have been four meetings of the Harrogate Branch of the Association during the year, on one occasion the speaker failed to attend and the meeting was terminated early.

Four members of this Council normally attend, Cllrs Wardman, Waller, Saunders and myself.

Generally the meetings are addressed by speakers dealing with subjects that are of concern to all member councils and after each meeting the minutes are circulated to all councils to keep them informed.

At all meetings it is indicated that currently the main aim of the Association is to encourage all councils to strive to become classified as Quality Councils.

2.8 Report by representative on Lower Nidd Community MiniBus Committee (Cllr Bowyer)

Two Cllrs are members of this Committee, Cllr Saunders and myself.

There have been four meetings during the year and I attended a National Conference in Manchester.

Day to day contact between the Committee and its full time staff is by regular meetings and telephone.

The bus is currently self-financing, mainly through its regular school contracts and at present finances are sound. There is some concern however as the bus will eventually need replacing and the revenue earned will be insufficient to meet the need. Our applications for grants have so far been refused.

Services are being revised from time to time to try to satisfy local need but there is some difficulty in providing cover as there is a considerable fluctuation in demand.

2.9 Report by CaP Group representative (Cllr Bowyer)

There have been four meetings of the Community and Police Group during the year.

The venue has been changed and meetings are now held at the new Council Offices in Boroughbridge.

There is a noticeable fall off in numbers attending both from participating councils and members of the public.

There is nothing of any consequence that I can report on from any of the four meetings but following each meeting minutes are circulated to the council and the members attending to keep them informed.

3.0 Report by County Councillor - Cllr J Savage

The year started well after the refusal of planning permission for the concrete crushing plant on the airfield but alas despite the efforts of so many it was a disappointment for the area when permission was granted for the expansion of a solvent disposal business on the business park.

Skewkirk Bridge has finally been given planning permission by North Yorkshire County Council.

As yet NYCC cannot comment when construction will commence so unfortunately the champagne will stay on ice!

The Sandbeds are still waiting to come before the Harrogate Public Rights of Way Committee as the case was adjourned after both sides required more time to gather information.

The safe route to school through the Prince Rupert estate has been referred to the Inspector in Bristol due to numerous objections, as soon as I have any news I will report back to the PC.

As a Governor of Tockwith Church of England Primary School it is a pleasure to report another excellent academic year and the commencement of construction for the new school facilities.

September 2004 brought the area better buses for the King James's route, far safer than the previous buses as they are equipped with seat belts and specially designed as a school bus.

Social Services are still exceeding their budget mainly because of the children's services.

The County has over 390 children in foster and specialist care and also the cost of care for the elderly both at home and in elderly people's homes.

Environmental Services with a budget of £50,000,000 estimate that due to years of under funding they would require at least £400,000,000 to repair our roads and implement all the safety schemes which are needed in all areas.

I'm still demanding that all our 320 schools in the county should have a 20 mph enforceable speed limit on the adjacent roads. I will continue until the campaign is successful.

It's been a pleasure to have worked with you all and also represented the Poppleton Ward for the last 8 years and I look forward to representing you all in the new extended Ainsty Ward from 6th May.

Report by District Councillor

HBC had been successful in obtaining a Lottery grant for the Royal Hall refurbishment.

4. Report from Internal Auditor - Mrs J Bygate

This report covers internal audit services from 12th May 2004 to 8th April 2005 and includes the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2005 on an Income/Expenditure basis.

The overall audit risk within the Council was assessed as low and the Internal Audit activity has been confined to:-

1. Monitoring of authorisation of and reports of expenditure throughout Parish Council meetings
2. Intermediate review of financial records of the Parish Council on a Receipts and Payments basis
3. A year-end test on the accuracy and completeness of the financial statements

No matter has arisen during my work which is required to be drawn to the attention of the External Auditors appointed by the Audit Commission.

No matters have been raised by the External Auditors requiring action by me as Internal Auditor.

5. Report by Responsible Financial Officer

The red Receipts and Payments ledger, having been balanced, was presented to the Council for ratification and the Chairman for signature.

The completed annual accounts for audit were presented to the Council, each cllr received a copy of the unaudited accounts and a receipts and payments summary for the year and questions were invited.

Cllrs were asked to agree the Statement of Assurance and External Audit record to confirm all necessary procedures had been carried out.

The balance carried forward at 31st March 2005 was £15,656.80.

The Chairman thanked all councillors for their work during the past year and declared the Annual Parish Meeting closed.