

PAPPLEWICK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 12th March 2008

Present: **Cllr Mr C Womble (Chairman)**
 Cllr Mrs S Roberts
 Cllr Mr J McCracken
 Cllr Mrs G McCracken
 Cllr Mr D Clayton
 Cllr Mr B Zinn **(7.40pm)**

Absent None

Parishioners 3

The meeting commenced at 7.15 p.m.

OPEN FORUM

PC Andy Vale (beat manager) reported on the latest crime figures. 2 thefts from vehicles, 2 thefts of vehicles and 1 driving offence. 2 burglaries, 1 drugs offence and case of criminal damage.

The chairman confirmed that the Council's top priorities are speeding traffic, Fly tipping and HGV's contravening the weight limits.

PC Vale advised that one officer had now been trained in the use of speed guns and he would shortly be instigating speed camera checks in the village

Julie Folkett, co-ordinator of the 1st Contact Signposting Scheme addressed the meeting. Julie advised that the scheme, co-ordinated by Gedling DC was set up in partnership with other agencies, Fire, Police and voluntary services to provide advice to elderly residents of services available to them and in particular to advise on suitable tradespersons to undertake work that they may require. It was agreed that the Council would distribute advice leaflets to all households in the Parish with the next Parish Newsletter and to include an article therein.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 14th March 2007.

The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

2. Chairman's report

Chairman's Annual Report 2007-2008

This is my second report as chairman and as always the year has been an active one. We started the year on very unsteady ground as a result of only two councillors successfully being nominated for election to the Council. Indeed, there was a real risk the Council could have been suspended until Gedling Borough Council nominated stand-in councillors with the result that local control would have been lost -perhaps on a long term basis. Despite this set-back parishioners came forward for co-option and I am pleased to say that we are once again at full strength.

I will now deal with events on the Playing Field. At the time of my last report the concrete base for the new skate park had been laid and we were waiting delivery of the equipment to go upon it. After various delays it was eventually installed during June. That installation did not go without further difficulties due to the inclement weather and waterlogged nature of the ground but once complete the new equipment was immediately and very successfully put to good use by numerous local youngsters and from further a field. Comments from users have indicated that it exceeds other skate parks in the vicinity in terms of usability. Unfortunately, due to the abysmal conditions under which the equipment was installed a significant proportion of the Playing Field surface was left in a very rutted and generally unsatisfactory state -a problem that took until October to rectify.

Due to the problems that arose during installation work, considerable time had to be spent liaising with contractors, other parties and generally resolving matters. Had it not been for the sterling efforts of Richard Hull and Cllr. Robinson -well, frankly, I do not know what we would have done. Thanks to both of them. Sadly, after the initial successful use of the skate park, several factors conspired together to result in the closure of the Playing Field for a number of weeks. School holidays and long evenings gave ample opportunity for mischief. Vandalism, littering and disturbance of local residents had to be dealt with. Arson to an asbestos cement shed in a garden on Linby Lane left fragments scattered over a wide area. Coupled with the unacceptable state of the Field itself as a result of the works in June meant that safety of Playing Field users was compromised. Temporary closure was the only option until these matters could be addressed. I am pleased to say that with considerable assistance from councillors and close cooperation from the police service these matters were quickly rectified.

Moving on, with some of the other equipment nearing the end of its useful life, the Playing Field committee have sought out further grants and these projects are now underway. The opportunity was also taken to remove the remainder of the conifers around the rest area and install a timber fence. Along with two picnic tables this has resulted in a much needed improvement to this section. November saw yet another highly successful Bonfire event. We were fortunate to have an even greater number of people attending than last year and raised considerable funds for the Leisure Enterprise Group. Events of this size and nature cannot be mounted without the help and support of a large number of people, and I particularly have in mind Leisure Enterprise Group members and all those who gave their time to help set up, run the event and clear up afterwards.

Perhaps more importantly, if we did not receive support from parishioners and people living further a field we would not achieve the success we undoubtedly have. Thanks to everyone involved.

Elsewhere in the parish the vicar and Parochial Church Council sought our assistance with a view to extending the churchyard at St. James. The Parish Council agreed to a financial contribution and I wish them well in securing this facility which will be of benefit to the parish for many years to come. For some years we have been attempting to improve both the notice board itself and its location on Mansfield Road. Thanks to Severn Trent Water, who have given permission to mount a new notice board on the fence at Newstead Pumping Station, this will improve access to the notice board without the need to cross a very busy road.

I am also pleased to report that Moor Pond Wood continues to be a shining example of what can be achieved by volunteers. Work on making its historic artefacts more accessible to the public has continued unabated with additional interpretation panels well on their way to completion. Looking forward, the County Council has begun to pursue a 25 year lease on the site and I know that the Steering Group will ensure local representation remains at the forefront of any long term arrangements to secure this valuable local amenity.

The Council's website has been considerably revised and remains a central part of our commitment to communicate to a wide audience. With an extensive archive of past minutes and Newsletters, the introduction of a 'hit' counter has revealed that the website is being utilised rather more than even we had anticipated. I thank Stephen Walker for all the time he has donated towards maintaining our presence on the web.

Our Newsletter was published on three occasions, all under Cllr. Robinson's editorship. It remains a vital element in communicating what we do to the parish.

A new Neighbourhood Watch scheme is now up and running thanks to Cllr. Clayton. It has its own section within the parish website and I would urge any parishioners who have not yet joined to do so. Neighbourhood Watch has proved very effective elsewhere in reducing criminal activity and there is no reason why it should not do so here. It is, in fact, even more important now than may have been the case before given that our local beat manager, P.C. Andy Vale, has a much enlarged area demanding his attention. Finally, a parish council cannot function effectively without commitment from everyone involved in its organisation. I am indebted to my fellow colleagues on the Council for the help and assistance they have provided throughout the year.

3. Linby School –Governors report

The Parish Council no longer has a school representative so no report was submitted.

4. Financial Officers report.
Report attached

5. Representatives reports

a. Moor Pond Wood

Cllr Mr D Clayton, the Parish Council's representative on the friends of MPW group advised that he had not been able to attend recent meetings of the group and was therefore unable to give a detailed report.

LH2 phase had now been completed and the groups were now looking to secure funds under phase 3. Nottinghamshire County Council, are looking to obtain agreement to a 25 year lease from the owners. The Cooperative Society had now given approval to a permissive path towards Papplewick Dam but were reluctant to approving a permanent path.

b. Julian Cahn Trust

Cllr Mrs S Roberts reported that :-
There is a temporary shortfall in funds due to a higher level of repairs to the various properties. Two new tenants have now moved in. As properties become empty they are being upgraded including the installation of Central Heating .Maintenance charges to tenants were raised to £35.00 per week in January this is still below market costs. All properties are currently occupied. There is still a vacancy for one trustee.

c. Parish Paths Partnership

Cllr Mr Colin Womble reported that:-

I am pleased to report that it has again been a largely uneventful year. All paths remained open and serviceable throughout the year. Usage of all paths continues to be high.

Grass cutting at Stanker Hill and along Church Lane continues to be undertaken by the P3 contractor. Minor works to remove vegetation has been carried out by Parish Council volunteers as usual and my thanks extend to them for their assistance.

Whilst not strictly a P3 matter, it is anticipated that the parish rights of way network will shortly be extended by some small degree with a path from the north end of Papplewick Dam to connect with Papplewick 1 (Meadows) path near the Leen bridge. Negotiations have been lengthy but the Moor Pond Wood Committee has secured agreement for a permissive path from all parties concerned and it is hoped that work on this much needed link will start shortly. Once complete, this will represent the conclusion of another element in the Council's long term Public Path Strategy.

I am pleased to say that we have had considerable support and assistance from Ashfield District Council who, as part of their Hidden Valleys initiative, intend to create walks through the parish. They have taken upon themselves the task of publicising these walks and have graciously devoted a greater part of their leaflets to promoting Papplewick's historic and architectural environment. This collaboration will ensure widespread publicity for Papplewick over a large area, much more than the Parish Council could achieve on its own, and all at minimal cost to the Parish Council. Promoting the rights of way network is a central requirement to our involvement with P3 and this association with Ashfield substantially furthers this aim.

On a similar note, a draft leaflet for walks through and around Papplewick has been submitted to Notts. County Council under the P3 scheme and received outline approval. It is anticipated this will also come to fruition during the coming year.

d. Playing Field

As Cllr Mrs J Robinson was unable to attend the meeting no formal report was presented. However it was noted that criminal damage had been caused to one of the swing seats. An order has been placed for a replacement.

e. Village Hall

No report

6. A.O.B.

It was reported that storm water drainage on Walters Hill was still causing problems.

The neighbourhood Watch links on the Parish Council website were now operative.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm

Signed Chairman

Vice Chairman