

BENWICK PARISH ASSEMBLY

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly of Benwick, held on Sunday 19 April 2015 in Benwick Village Hall, Church Room, commencing at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs: M Chapman (Chair); T Richardson; L Keppel-Spoor; R Emmitt; J Richardson (Clerk) and 3 members of public

1. Chairperson's Address

Cllr Mark Chapman opened the meeting by introducing himself as Chairman of the Benwick Parish Council. He welcomed and thanked residents for attending this Annual Assembly for 2015.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Annual Assembly Meeting held on 13 April 2014 were correctly recorded and that they were signed as being a true record.

3. Benwick Parish Council Chairman's Report

During the past year the Parish Council has:-

- The Chairman thanked the departing Parish Councillors (Tony, Pat and Kev) for their work over the last few years and they will be missed from the Council
- The Parish has a healthy enough budget to have a 0% increase in the Precept
- Earmarked funds have been allocated to the Cemetery Extension, Upkeep and cleaning of the War Memorial and also the Mooring.
- The Street Lights position has improved this year, thanks to Cllr Richardson, as 11 Category 1 street lights are to be replaced, paid for by FDC, and they will also fund the power and maintenance for all the street lights, there will be a loss of grant funding but this is minimal. This result has taken a lot of hard work to achieve.
- The Cycle Race is to be held again in 2015, and there will be 2 races this year in June and July.
- The Play Park is being progressed and funding will be looked into next year. Activity on work is hoped to start next winter.
- The traffic improvement on the High Street has been installed following representation to the council by parishioners regarding speeding on the High Street.
- New website has been created by the Clerk at benwickparishcouncil.btck.co.uk which has been designed to allow easy access by Parishioners to documents, such as minutes
- Flagpole erected next to War Memorial as part of WW1 commemorations.
- The issue of dog excrement has been raised to the Council and an exercise to try and highlight the problem has taken place

4. Financial Report

The Clerk reported that Income for the year 2014-15 totalled £19,235.42 (13-14 £23,832.03) Expenditure was £14,391.22 (13-14 £18,352.60). Main difference is related to the Cemetery Railings

This resulted in a retained surplus of £3,808.52 (13-14 £5,479.43) with Earmarked Reserves of £579.23

Current assets are £90,442

5. Village Organisation Reports:

Friends of Benwick Church: Apologies were given by John Hoffman

Benwick Ladies Club: Very successful, open to new members, meetings are on 3rd Monday of the month in the Village Hall, reports are in the Benwick Bugle

Benwick Residents Association: The Dickensian Market was successful again. This year the event will be held on Sat 14th November 2015. Planning is starting for the event.

Village Hall: Had a steady year and looks like will break even on the year. Encouraging new members onto the Committee. Fund raising was an up and down year. Burns Night was a success but other events had to be cancelled. Fund raising then looked at and took the form of psychic suppers. Solid year overall, looking at redecorating, new prices from April 2015.

Turf Fen Charity: Available to help people in need in the village. Funds are allocated to individuals when a needy application is received. Lilyholt Road Website and Benwick Parish Council websites will contain details.

Burnthouse WindFarm Fund: This fund will be advertised in the Bugle and is open to all charitable groups in the village to apply for funds. Been running since Sept 2013 and £36K has been allocated so far. Next round of funding closes in September 2015. Some of the criteria of the fund was discussed.

Cycle Races: A Cycle Race is on 6/7 June 2015 which is the Tour of Cambridge, this will be coming through the village, more information is being looked into. Weekend of 25/26 July is the main cycle race weekend. There will be a Circuit of Benwick race this year on Sunday 26 July, with the main race coming through later in the day. The Sat 25 July race is the amateur sportive race. A scarecrow competition will also be held on that weekend and suggestions for a theme would be welcome. A meeting will be organised to include groups in the village. Volunteers to help over the weekend would be welcome.

6. Open Forum

Traffic improvements to the High Street are believed to be impacting on Lilyholt Road, as vehicles are now using Lilyholt Road rather than High Street. Lilyholt road could be considered for a transport scheme in the future.

The Chair Mark Chapman thanked all the various Groups for their reports and everyone for attending.

Meeting Closed at 6.28 p.m