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Notes of the Annual Parish Meeting – 28 April 2014

This was an informal meeting, with no formal agenda or minutes taken. However the following notes may be of interest to parishioners:

The meeting was attended by Councillors, the Parish Clerk, and approximately eleven parishioners.

Following introductions, the Council Chairman, **Mr Tim Ellis**, invited the trustees of the village charities to present their annual reports. A summary of each report is highlighted below and a full copy is attached as an appendix to these notes.

Charities:

- **Bluntisham Community Fund.** **Mrs Kathy Searle** confirmed that the balance of the account was £925.53 and welcomed applications for donations from the fund. There have been no recent events held to add to the current total.
- **Feoffees.** **Mr Richard Saltmarsh** reported on The Feoffees achievements over the past year and plans for the coming year, including restoring the bus shelter at Block Hill and also £1,000 which has been promised to BacStage for their school renovations. The charity accounts show a closing balance of £9378.80 at 31 Dec 13.
- **Saywell Church Causeway.** **Mr Mike Bateman**, representing Revd. Sheila Anthony. Mike Bateman stated that all the charities have been removed from the Charity Commission registers because income is less than £5K. He confirmed that the charity has appointed new trustees and they are working to fulfil the objects and understand the assets and income of the charity. They have agreed in principal to fund a bench along the path of the old causeway between Earith and Bluntisham and will consider other requests to support benches in Bluntisham at their next meeting. The charity accounts show a closing balance of £4544.63 at 13 Aug 13. Members of the parish council requested copies of the minutes from meetings where the charities changed and Mike Bateman is to share these with the clerk.
- **Bluntisham Saywells School Charity.** **Mr Mike Bateman** provided accounts for the year to 31 Dec 13 which show a balance of £9367.42. During a recent meeting the trustees agreed grants to the following: Messy Church £250, StepZ on after school club £300, St Helens School Needingworth Quarry visit £60 & agreed in principle Somersham Band tuition at St Helens School £500.

Chairman's report: Thanks to all who have contributed towards the huge amount of work carried out during the year. A copy of the full report is attached to these notes; here is a summary of the achievements within 2013-14:

- Precept not increased during 2014-15
- Dogs on playing field – a proper legal dog exclusion order is in place for all areas used for sport and the recreation of children. A designated area in the south-east corner of the field for a dog run has resulted in positive feedback. The fence is temporary and it is intended it will be replaced with low level hedging later this year.

- Street light changes have been completed successfully creating a brighter downward pool of light, while reducing light pollution. The initial cost of this was funded by CCC but any future changes have to be funded by the PC. There is no budget set aside for these changes.
- Significant progress has been made on the issue of a footpath (and ultimately, we hope, a cycle path) that will bypass the railway bridge. Mr Dolby and the Rose family have promised land to put the footpath in. Thanks to Frank Hudson for all the hard work he has put into this project.
- Thanks again to Frank Hudson for the new planting in the community orchard which should yield a wide range of different fruits.
- Following meetings in November to discuss the A14 improvement project have resulted in the removing of the tolling option.
- Funding has been approved to improve the area around the Barograph on Block Hill & Feoffees are considering what they might do to improve the Bus Shelter in the same area.
- Special thanks went to Sue Morgan who stepped down as clerk following 7 years of dedication in September. Thanks went to Mandy Pink, who took over as clerk and got the funding for the Block Hill works, has stepped down and been replaced with Tracey Davidson as the new clerk.
- Robin Carter stepped down but remains a District Councillor. Also stepping down were Ken Banks, Mike Francis and Elinor McNeil. Thanks to all of them for their contributions during the year.
- New councillors were welcomed aboard Cynthia Curtis and Emily Godfrey, however, there are still vacancies if anyone would like to contribute in this way please contact the clerk for more information.
- Finally Tim confirmed that he would be stepping down from the council following his 2 years as chairman.

Questions from the floor and actions agreed:

Sue Everest raised concerns with the barograph area improvements and Anne Parker questioned why no parking restrictions had been put in place. Richard Saltmarsh advised if parking becomes an issue to contact the police. Hopefully the highways department will get involved once the works have been completed.

Margaret Lumb advised several complaints had been received regarding the parking on the slight bend by the Coronation bench opposite 17A WoodEnd. The police have looked at it but are happy as it slows the traffic down. Parking on the verge is not an option. The recommendation to all is to report any concerns to the police directly.

Margaret Lumb as Highways Officer advised the pavement improvements in the village have been funded via “safer routes to schools fund” however, there isn’t any further money for other village improvements. It was highlighted that an excellent job has been carried out and these thanks will be passed onto those involved.

Margaret Lumb also mentioned that the recent road closures to Earith and the traffic lights in Bluntisham was poor timing and has reported this along with the poor signage to the highways officer. Richard Saltmarsh confirmed that works to develop an “all weather sports pitch” behind the village hall are under negotiation. Grant funding is being sought and expressed that this was very much at the informal stages. It was agreed that once formal quotes and grant funding had been confirmed to hold a public meeting to discuss in detail.

Mrs Parker asked if the toilets were open when football matches are being played and was advised the managers of the home teams all have keys for these facilities. Mrs Parker questioned plans for the “Eco”development in Wood End. The PC advised that no plans have been received yet.

Tracey Davidson

Tracey Davidson
Parish Clerk