

BENINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

e-mail: clerk.beningtonpc@yahoo.co.uk

Annual Parish Meeting
14 May 2014 following the Annual Parish Council Meeting
Benington School

Minutes

Present: R Bott (Chair) K Mays
K Grundy M Spicer
C Brown

In attendance: P C Harrison (Clerk) and 5 members of the public.

01. Apologies: No apologies.

02. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday, 8 May 2013 were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

03. Annual Parish Report

The Chairman gave his annual report as follows:-

Sadly our Chairman Lloyd Jones passed away in February; he had been on the Parish Council for 23 years. Lloyd was held in much affection throughout the village and will be sorely missed. There have been a number of tributes to him in the March Parish Council meeting, in the Parish Magazine and at his very well attended funeral. So it is probably best not to repeat them here. However, I know that many people in the village would like a memorial to Lloyd, and this subject is on the agenda.

Staying with our Chairman, he would have been very much saddened by the closure of the Bell. The good news is that it has been bought by Mr and Mrs Hosein from Trinidad. They will be re-opening the Bell on Saturday, 17 May. The closure brought home to many of us how important a part of the community our two pubs are. It is important for all of us, that is those of us who are old enough, to support them. This is certainly something that Lloyd would have supported wholeheartedly.

The main planning events, apart from the usual garages and extensions, have been the granting of permission for five houses at Alchemy Works behind Ernest Doe. Circle Anglia have also gained permission for and begun work building houses on their old garage site at Blacksmiths Hill. The garages behind Three Stiles have been refused but are currently in the appeal process. East Herts Council has launched their consultation for the District Plan. Benington has been declared a Category 2 village which currently means no significant development.

Though it is still too early in the process to know for certain. As part of the District Plan, Benington has been invited to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. We have advertised in the Parish Magazine for residents to come forward to prepare one and so far four have done so.

The roads have produced their usual crop of potholes and complaints. The good news is that the resurfacing and new kerb along the Town lane bottleneck appears to have worked well, both in terms of stopping the pot holes and in easing traffic flow.

The School maintained an outstanding assessment in its Ofsted report.

Karen Mays organised over £10,000 worth of new play equipment installed in the playground in time for last year's summer holidays. It has been very popular with all ages and has seen extensive use.

Relations between Benington Recreation Ground Charity Trust and the Parish Council have been pretty strained at times, but we have continued talking to each other. The Parish Council has been discharged as Custodian Trustee for the Trust. It does however continue to appoint the treasurer, and after a few false starts Natalie Clennell has very kindly agreed to do this. The Parish Council has also arranged to hand over ownership of the Playground and its equipment to the Trust. Aside from these manoeuvrings, the good news is that work has begun on the new Pavilion. Footings have been dug and foundations poured. The Trust is very keen that the build should be a community effort, so if any one has any building experience they should get in touch with BRGCT.

04. Accounts

The Chairman presented the accounts for the year 2013/2014.

05. Question Time

Topics discussed:

Bus Timetables

New bus timetables to be printed and laminated and put up in the bus shelters.

Shummery Lane

A complaint was received regarding over hanging tree branches and the general state of Shummery Lane.

Village Signs

The direction signs on Church Green need replacing. It was agreed to ask Cllr Ken Crofton to investigate this matter as it has been reported many times to Highways by the Parish Council.

Jubilee Seat

A question was asked as to the whereabouts of the Jubilee Seat. Cllr Bott said he had the seat and it would be installed as soon as possible.

Village Pond

The state of the village pond was discussed and it was suggested that a working party be formed to clear the pond.

Cllr Bott said that he would contact the Countryside Management Service and also the Wildlife Trust to see if they could offer any help with clearing the pond.

06. Members' Points of Information

A resident of Blacksmith's Hill has contacted the Parish Council regarding flooding in the area behind the flats. The Chairman to look into past correspondence, and investigate this matter further.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 09.06 pm.