

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 20TH APRIL 2017

Mr Fenn opened the meeting, introduced himself and welcomed Councillors and members of the public. Apologies had been received from Mr Burling and Mr T Sutton.

Signing of the Minutes of the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting:

These were taken as read and signed as a true record of that meeting.

Presentation of Over Church and Town Lands Charity accounts:

Mr Drain, Clerk to the Charity, who had been scheduled to attend the meeting, was not in attendance so this item could not be taken.

Chairman's Report:

Mr Fenn presented his annual report:

Green, Recreation Centre and other village areas.

Thanks to the efforts of Dave Bridgman Over once again continued to play the majority of fixtures as well as assisting Swavesey with some games due to their pitch having drainage work carried out. Dave came 2nd this year in the Cambridgeshire Football Association's Groundsman of the Year awards. The planned work to lower the goal mouths will be taking place in May this year to bring them back to the same height as the football pitch. This year also saw the replacement of all doors and windows at the pavilion and further refurbishment work is planned here. The Parish Council has been active in other areas over the year and significant tree and clearance works have been carried out at Sandpit pond and Duces' pond improving the look of both areas. The PC have also taken more responsibility for the skate park and installed extra litter bins and employed a litter picker on a part time basis to keep this area free of rubbish.

Footpaths and hedges

The Parish Council is under greater pressure to maintain the hedges and ditches in the village as the County and District councils come under ever greater budget cuts. A lot of this work is taken on by Dave Bridgman but some areas are owner responsibility and these issues need to be resolved between land owners and local authority. We encourage the reporting of any areas which are untidy or unsafe and we will seek to address any issues as they arise. The PC are now a long way into registering all the small parcels of land within the village which are cared for by the PC but have no record of ownership with the land registry.

Communication

The Parish Council website is working well and we encourage any questions or comments to be made via the website and we will seek to address these. The Parish Council are looking to co-opt a new member at present and hope to attract someone familiar with Social Media to give a new form of communication. The village website continues to be available as it always has been but we are looking to modernise this in the coming months.

Finance and Budgets

The Parish Council held its precept this year at the same level as last year (£50,000) and we have maintained our support of the Day Centre at £3000. We are looking at areas of capital expenditure using S106 monies received from developments in the village. These payments have restrictions on what they can be spent on but we have recently approved the replacement of a lot of the play equipment at the Community Centre which will take place towards the end of May 2017. The Community Centre Committee is also looking into any capital projects they may have which the Parish Council, as Landlords, are looking to support.

General

There have been an unprecedented amount of planning applications over the last year and it is inevitable that there will be a lot of changes to come within the village. The Council will continue to challenge and support these applications to try to achieve the best outcome for the village.

In 2018 the whole council is up for re-election and so if anyone is interested in becoming a councillor next year there will be a full election.

On behalf of the Parish Council Mr Fenn thanked everyone who does anything for the benefit of the village including Mr Hayward, The Church and Town Lands charity, Over litter pickers, Dave Bridgman, Richard Fenwick, Terence Skinner, the staff at the Over Community Centre and all others who contribute. He went on to thank the Clerk and his fellow councillors for their hard work and support in particular the Vice Chair Geoff Twiss who carries out a lot of work that is not often recognised. Mr Robinson thanked Mr Fenn, on behalf of the Council for all his hard work during the past year.

Planning in the Village:

Mr Peter Jackson, a resident of Fen End, had requested this agenda item and the Chairman invited him to address the meeting. Mr Jackson noted the increase in planning applications and asked how the Parish Council could help protect the village from overdevelopment. He noted that the group status of the village, which had restricted developments in the village to 8 houses, has now been removed in light of the lack of a five year housing plan and this now enables larger applications to be considered. He did note however that following the adoption of the new local plan the group status of Over may be reinstated. Large developments for example the application for land in Fen End, he felt, would put a strain on local resources including schools, healthcare and roads. He noted that recently Swavesey Parish Council had held a public meeting due to concerns over the number and scale of developments being proposed and he asked if this was something the Parish Council would consider. Mr Fenn invited Mr Twiss to respond to Mr Jackson's comments. Mr Twiss stated that he was often nominated to attend the planning meetings at the District Council on behalf of the Parish Council in respect of any applications the Parish Council had concerns over. Objections had been made in respect of the Mill Road development at both District Council level and at appeal although this application had been granted at appeal. Mr

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Twiss did however point out that the application in Fen End has now been withdrawn although the Parish Council had no real planning objections in respect of this other than highway safety. Mr Twiss felt that the finalisation of the local plan was some way off still however he did note that the District Council had sought legal advice on how they could defend against inappropriate applications which used the lack of a five year supply to justify the application and they had received advice on this. Mr Twiss stated that there are quite a few developments being explored and the Parish Council do try to resist the larger applications although some development is needed to ensure the village continues to thrive as a community. Mr Bill Robertson, also a Fen End resident also expressed concerns over the increase in developments especially in relation to traffic within the village not only during the construction phase but also once the dwellings are occupied. Mr Fenn stated that County Council highways are always consulted on applications and as this is their area of responsibility, ultimately the final decision on whether the roads are able to cope with the increase from proposed developments is down to them. Mr Fenn encouraged Parishioners who did have concerns over planning applications to ensure they copy the Parish Council in on any comments they make to the District Council, he also noted that Parishioners have no less influence than the Parish Council in such matters. Mr Twiss also noted that the increase in any developments in Over and some surrounding areas will impact on waste water and sewerage and this will in turn put more strain on the drainage systems and also increase the number of sewerage tankers using Fen End. Mr Jackson stated that he had attended the open event held by Bloor homes who are to develop the area off Mill Road and noted that the vast majority of people attending the event were opposed to the application but the application had still been granted at appeal.

Presentation of Parish Council Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017:

These had been made available along with some explanatory notes and questions were invited. There were none.

There being no further business Mr Fenn thanked parishioners for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.24pm

Chairman