

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Beeston with Bittering Parish Council held on **TUESDAY, 29TH APRIL 2008**, in Beeston Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Chairman: G. Fowler.

Councillors Present: T. Burton, J. Farrall, R Sharpin and J Thompson

District Councillor M Kiddle Morris

Apologies for Absence: Councillors A Laws, T Townshend, Mr P Parfitt
7 Members of the Public.

MINUTES

The Minutes of 24th April 2007 had been circulated but could be read out if requested. No request was made. The minutes were signed as a true record

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT APRIL 2008

As in previous years, the Parish Council met every month except December.

In line with the general trend throughout the country, there was a drop in the number of Planning applications which the Council considered. This year's total was 21 as against 29 the previous year.

Three of these went to Appeal.

There was no election for Parish Councillors in 2007 as there were less than 7 candidates. We were nevertheless pleased to begin the new Council year by welcoming 2 new Councillors, Toni Townshend and Tara Burton. It is particularly gratifying to have Tara on board as she must surely be one of the youngest Parish Councillors in the County. A few weeks later, James Thompson agreed to be co-opted onto the Council, which brought us up to full strength.

As a result of the findings arising from the Village Appraisal published last year, the Parish Council organised and carried out a Traffic Survey last autumn. We were very fortunate with the weather and traffic was monitored and recorded over a twelve hour period. I would like to record sincere thanks and appreciation of all those who took part on the day and special thanks to Julian Farrell who organised it all and who has worked tirelessly (with Hazel's help) to collate all the results. We hope to publish these very soon. This has been delayed by the very short time-scale allowed for responding to the Minerals and Waste proposals put forward by Norfolk County Council. These proposals have potentially very widespread implications for Beeston with Bittering and the area generally and the Parish Council set aside all other matters to ensure that all residents were made aware of the proposals and the steps that should be taken to make their views known before final decisions were taken.

It is anticipated that considerable work will be put in by the Parish Council to ensure that the wishes and views of the community are put forward in respect of the Local Development Framework. This is the chance for us to have our say in what happens (or does not happen) in the way of the development of Beeston with Bittering in the years to come. To this end, we shall be attending a joint meeting with other parishes and the LDF Team from Breckland Council on guidelines, on 18th June at Litcham.

We will also be further considering our response to the proposals for the Local Government Review.

During the course of the year, the Parish Clerk and myself have met up regularly with Headmistress Ani Martin and Liz Walne of County Hall to discuss the School Travel Plan and the various ways in which we could join forces to improve the traffic and parking problems around the

school. This has resulted in visits from Community Police officers to speak to Parents outside the school, the remarking of the zig-zag and bus parking road markings and a feasibility study for more footpaths. The Parish Clerk made a successful application for temporary 'Son of Sam' flashing speed signs. It was noted that these were not always very accurate, so we are again on the list for another visit. Any feedback on their effectiveness would be welcome.

It is gratifying to learn that both the new Brownie pack and the Cricket Club are thriving, as is the Village Hall. I would like to congratulate the committee on the success of the diverse events put on for our entertainment and edification this year.

As usual, the annual Remembrance Services at the Church and American Memorial were very well attended, as was the informal reception in the Village Hall afterwards.

On the 'downside', Beeston appears to have lost out in the Post Office lottery, but we are not called 'Battling Beeston' for nothing and will not be going down without a fight.

I am pleased to report that the annual accounts have been completed and copies are available this evening should anyone wish to take them away for inspection.

Finally, I should like to record my thanks to my fellow Councillors for their help and support throughout the year. I should also like to congratulate Bryan Leigh, our Parish Clerk, on his first full year in post. His knowledge, advice, support, commitment and his sense of humour has been invaluable.

FUEL CHARITY ACCOUNT

The Clerk reported that 44 parishioners received £26 from the Beeston Fuel Charity, of which 3 has not been cashed. The balance as at 31st March is £97.89. It was agreed that the parish council would become the trustees of the Charity and the necessary dispensations from Breckland council are being sought.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

1ST BEESTON RAINBOWS AND BROWNIES

As attached

BEESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

As attached

BITTERING PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church is in good repair and attendances average 9 per service which are held once per month. The Church was full for the Christmas carol service and the Christmas fundraising raised £813.

FRIENDS OF BEESTON SCHOOL

As attached

BEESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

As attached

BEESTON CRICKET CLUB

The Club played 10 matches winning 5. There are a lot of young players in the side which is a good basis for the future. The club has now joined the West Norfolk league and will play league matches on Saturdays and friendlies on Sundays.

BEESTON PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE

BEESTON PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE-April'07-'08

The energy and enthusiasm of volunteers from Beeston is evident in the hall and field. After last year's external redecoration, last May efforts were directed at internal refurbishment with redecoration and new curtains (these made by Mr Gussman).

Subsequently as you see the stage has been modified – now in three parts for flexibility or removal to give greater floor space.

The cricket Club has done an excellent job of maintaining the grass. A more efficient Ransomes ride-on mower and a rotary flymo have been purchased from Playing Field funds and a motorized roller added to the fleet!

Following a day last summer for youngsters and parents to give their preferences for the play area, improvements have started with a 'mother's' table and benches and waste bin (this will be emptied by volunteer youngsters).

Additionally new safety matting has been purchased and a volunteer team is about to fit it.

Plans for this year include improvements to the car park and waste re-cycling area.

SOCIAL

The trustees arrange various social events aimed at both bringing the village together and raising funds to cover costs of maintenance/improvements.

FINANCIAL

Total income (including direct payment by Parish Council for mowing 06/07-£750 and mower-£400).

£11069.96

Total expenses (including cost of mowing and mower).

£10676.74

Net Income

£393.22

FUNDS @ 05/04/08.

Deposit Account.

£5180.44

Current Account

£1185.00

Cash in hand

£401.01

Total

£6766.45

Against this are commitments made for 2008/2009 of £2043.50 for play area bin/benches/safety matting.

NB: Parish Council contributions for the totalled £1150.00 (see mowing above) compared to previous years £1500.00 to cover mowing and cleaning. Cleaning costs amounted to £1083.75 last year.

BEESTON SCHOOL GOVERNORS**Beeston Primary School: Report to the Parish Council April 2008.**

The past year has been a year of further progress for the school under the excellent leadership of the Head teacher and the dedicated staff of teachers and assistants.

The School House was reopened after extensive renovation providing a new library, kitchen for use by the children and a room for staff use. Outside saw the completion of the new sensory garden and many other improvements to the outdoor environment. An imaginative Travel Plan to ensure the safety of the children when travelling to and from school brought a grant which enabled the purchase of a beautiful Baltic Chalet for wet weather use.

In June 2007 the school was the subject of an Ofsted Inspection. It was the judgement of the Inspector that Beeston Primary School is a good school with some outstanding features. The school's "Investor in people" award, earned three years ago, was reviewed this year and our status confirmed.

The Head Teacher, staff and governors continue to monitor progress in all aspects of learning and together work hard to maintain and improve standards. New computers have been purchased, interactive white boards are now in each classroom, and a number of key boards have been purchased.

Perhaps the most significant event this year has been the announcement by the Head Teacher of her retirement at the end of the current school year. After a very rigorous process the Governing Body appointed Mr Christopher Perry to succeed Mrs Martin. Mr Perry will take up his appointment on the 1st September.

Philip Parfitt
Chair of Governors
26th April 2008

OPEN FORUM

There was a request for the hedge at the Claypits to be cut and this would be looked at in the New Year as it was too late to cut this year.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting then closed.