

BLACKWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Blackwell Parish Council held at Hilcote Miners Welfare and Community Centre, New Street, Hilcote on Monday 13 April 2015 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor N J B Willens, (Chairman).

Councillors I G Cox: Mrs C Munks: I J A Newham: R A Poulter: R J Sainsbury: B Stocks: A F Tomlinson and L Walker.

ALSO PRESENT

P C Lorna Evans, Derbyshire Constabulary and three parishioners.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D G B Bullock and C R Moesby.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 7 April 2014 were approved and signed as a correct record

CHAIRMANS REPORT 2014/2015

The Chairman reported to the Council regarding the activities carried out by the Blackwell Parish Council during the year 2014/2015 and also reviewed some of the many organisations which were active in the community. He also gave an overview of the Council's plans for the year 2015/2016. He reviewed each village in turn and starting with Blackwell

BLACKWELL

a. Blackwell Community Centre

This remains a major hub for community activities in the life of the Parish and, as such represents one of our major assets.

He reported that Blackwell Post Office continues operate at the Community Centre on Tuesday and Thursday mornings 9.00 a.m. to 1 p.m. and is very well patronised

by local residents. No doubt this is helped by the Blackwell Residents Action Group providing tea, coffee and other refreshments on these two mornings, not to mention an opportunity to catch up on what is happening in the village and the world at large. A recent addition to the attraction is the attendance on Tuesdays of a local butcher giving those attending the opportunity to buy fresh meat and meat products. Attempts are being made to add a greengrocer to this offer

b. Blackwell Youth Club.

The Council was pleased to note that the Youth Club continues to be successful. An average of 50 children attend the session for 5-11 year olds and up to 35 the session for 8-16s. A further trip to the Kingswood Education and Activity Centre is being planned this year for the end of May 2015 for 41 children and 7 volunteers.

c. Blackwell Residents Action Group.

This group continues to be very active for the benefit of all members of the community. Ongoing activities include several litter picks around the village and continued maintenance of the planters, now six, with two new ones on either side of the Mining Monument, together with formal flower-beds and seasonal planting. More bulb planting is planned to further brighten the village next Spring. As mentioned before, BRAG provides the Community Coffee Shop on the days the Post Office is open in the Community Centre. They also arranged football coaching sessions for 5-16 year olds in the school holidays.

Last year saw the erection of a Christmas tree illuminated throughout the Christmas period on the corner of Primrose Hill and Woburn Close the lighting of which was celebrated with a concert given by the Chapelton Silver Prize Band. These concerts are now taking place twice a year and are well attended.

Other events included the now regular Pea and Pie Supper / Bingo nights and a Christmas Fayre and jumble sales for fund raising. The Group also provided a Christmas Party for children aged 5-11 years, a Christmas Lunch for over 60s at the Hilcote Country Club and a party for pupils leaving Blackwell School.

d. Blackwell Children's Centre

The Children's Centre continues to operate successfully at Blackwell Primary School. The Centre has two full time Children Centre workers and one part-time worker. The Centre caters for a variety of activities including the "Peep" Group" for 0 – 1 year olds and the "Stay and Play" Groups. In addition to these activities extra outdoor activities have been organised during school holidays.

e. Blackwell Mother and Toddler Group.

This Group continues to operate successfully under the leadership of Kelly Gordon. There are approximately 10 children up to 3 years old who attend the Play Group on Tuesday afternoons and Wednesday mornings at the Community Centre.

f. Wesley Guild.

Following the closure of the Methodist Church in Blackwell, the Wesley Guild now meet in the Community Centre with 20-22 members attending.

HILCOTE

a. Hilcote Environmental and Leisure Group

It has been another busy year. The 'Woodland Project' now being on a care and maintenance basis but there are plans for further extension. The Group ran another successful fund raising "Duck Day" in September. A tree was planted on the corner of Pasture Lane which was illuminated at Christmas and complements the planting of Spring daffodils carried out last year.

b. Hilcote Miners Welfare and Community Centre.

Since the Parish Council took over as sole corporate trustee last year, the excellent facilities offered by the Centre continue to be used by a number of groups including the Methodist Youth Club, the small bore Gun Club, an Art Class and a dog training class.

Plans are also in hand for the Council to take over the trusteeship of the former football pitch in Pasture Lane from the Miners' Welfare organisation to ensure its future use as a public open space.

NEWTON

a. Newton Community Centre.

The Centre is actively used by local groups and represents the third major hub for community activities in the life of the Parish. Regular users include St Werburgh's Parochial Church Council, Newton Women's Institute, Newton and District Old Peoples Club, a Yoga Club, the Mother & Toddler Group, the Newton Carnival Team, Newton Community Association and a Kick Boxing Class. A Dance Class is held on a Friday evening.

b. Newton Community Association

The Association continues to help improve the appearance of the village by maintaining planters and holding litter picks. The two large planters by the entrance to the village from Tibshelf were beginning to rot and are being replaced with smaller ones similar to those in Blackwell and Westhouses.

Film shows on the last Thursday of each of the winter months have continued with a wide variety of entertainment, from Oscar winning 'Grand Budapest Hotel' to 'Philomena'. Refreshments are provided by members of the Women's Institute.

In cooperation with the Parish Council, the Association is working with Groundwork Creswell to obtain additional funding and use this to provide new play equipment for children of all ages on Charnwood Crescent Playing Fields.

c. Newton and Blackwell Allotment and Leisure Gardeners' Association

It is encouraging to note that the majority of allotments at Littlemoor Lane, and North/South Streets, Newton are under cultivation and that there has been an increase in usage of the allotments located The Ridge, Blackwell. There are still some vacancies at all three sites. Anyone interested in some healthy activity in the open air and a source of fresh food should contact him or a member of the Association's committee.

d. Newton Carnival Team.

He was pleased to note that the Team had another successful year in organising their now traditional events:

The 16th Annual Carnival, which attracted the usual high number of visitors. It is the highlight of the Team's year and is one of the largest such events in the area.

The Annual Bonfire and Firework Display, now in its seventh year.

The Christmas Fayre and Lights, held at the Community Centre at which the village lights are switched on, culminating in a firework display

Santa's visit to the four villages of the Parish on his illuminated sleigh giving sweets and gifts to the children and residents of local care homes.

e. Newton Mother and Toddler Group.

The Group continues to be led by Kath Mann and meets every Thursday afternoon at Newton Community Centre and provides play activities for children up to 5 years old.

Old Blackwell

As has been mentioned in previous reports there are now 15 Parish and Town Councils within the district of Bolsover and Blackwell Parish Council is proud to be one of the very limited number of these Councils to have conservation areas and most residents are aware of the ones situated at Old Blackwell and Newton.

Westhouses

We continue to have problems with the solar lighting installed on the Tibshelf Road Playing Fields which have been traced back to the control units and their associated software. It was anticipated that replacement units would be fitted towards the end of April.

General Matters

The Parish Council held a Civic Service at St Werburgh's Parish Church on 3rd August to commemorate the outbreak of World War I at which commemorative kneelers were presented to each of the churches in the parish. Refreshments were served afterwards by the Parochial Church Council in a marquee provided by Newton Carnival Team. This was in addition to the traditional annual Remembrance Day service held at the War Memorial in Newton.

Parish Council Finances:

At the Special Meeting of the Parish Council held on 26 January 2015 to discuss our finances for the coming year, it was resolved that a Precept of £120,500.00 be levied on Bolsover District Council for the financial year 2015/2016. The aim was to maintain the sum paid by individual households unchanged, but was slightly complicated by an increase in the tax base on one hand and our share of the pain caused by the reduction in central government grant to local authorities on the other.

When the Council reviewed its budget it was agreed to approve the following items of expenditure for the financial year 2015/2016, in addition to the routine costs of maintaining its services:

Replacement of the stolen village entry sign on Tibshelf Road (£730)
Installation of an Alarm System at Newton Community Centre (£730)
Provision of a new heavy duty strimmer (£650)
Decoration of Community Centres (£4000)
Youth Activities (£720)
Advertising availability for hire of our Community Centres (£1000)

Support Services

Richard Walker, the Council's Part Time Parish Caretaker continues to provide the Council with an excellent service and his high profile within the Parish has not gone unnoticed by the vast majority of residents. He also expressed his thanks to Rita Mann, Val Wilson and Tracy Swallow who look after Blackwell, Hilcote and Newton Community Centres.

The Council had been fortunate in having our regular Beat Officer, PC Lorna Evans. For most of the year she was ably supported by PCSOs Paul Brownlee and Stuart Swaby. Unfortunately for us Stuart has left us to join Nottinghamshire Constabulary as a regular PC and he will not be replaced. These Officers regularly attend Council Meetings and have always dealt promptly with any complaints or queries made either by members of the Council or local residents.

Pantomime

The Council continues to fund an Annual Pantomime at Blackwell and Newton Community Centres for the children from Blackwell, Newton, Westhouses Primary Schools and also local Mother and Toddler Groups. Last year's offering was 'Cinderella'. The feedback from all these organisations is excellent.

Floral Displays

The Council will again this year be funding the floral displays within the Parish area, and extend the display outside the Community Centres for the full twelve months of the year. There has been excellent feedback from local residents and visitors to the Parish with regard to the displays.

Council Newsletter

The Councils Newsletter has been published on a quarterly basis and is under the excellent editorship of Councillor Ian Newham and the Newsletter is delivered to all households within the Parish by volunteers from various community groups.

I should like to point out that this is the last Parish Meeting with the present Council. There will be a number of very significant changes in the composition of the Council after the General Election on 7 May. There will be no election at Parish level with all the candidates being returned unopposed.

The biggest change will be the absence of Alan Tomlinson. Alan has been a Member of the Parish Council since 1975 and Bolsover District Council since 1979 and in that particular capacity he has ensured that there has been a good working relationship with all departments of the District Council. We shall all miss him and feel the loss of his enormous experience at Parish Council meetings.

We shall also miss the presence of Mrs Paula Wilkinson who stood down earlier this year because of pressure of work from her business. He regarded it as regrettable that we do not any longer have a resident of Westhouses as a member of the Council. He also noted that Len Walker is not standing again and would like to thank him for keeping us on our toes and for his contribution to our proceedings.

County Councillor Clive Moesby

Despite the difficult economic climate Clive has worked extremely hard at County level on behalf of this Council and the Parish as a whole. He was aware, that through Clive, a number of local residents' and voluntary groups have benefited from the Derbyshire County Council local grant scheme.

Attendance at Parish Council Meetings

He expressed his appreciation for the attendance of his fellow councillors, and their active participation, at Parish Council meetings. They are all busy people with plenty of other demands on their time. One should not forget that they do this voluntarily and for no reward other than the satisfaction it brings. As is done by other local Parish Councils and the District and County Councils, he intended to publish a table with the actual attendance figures for the last two years with the printed version of this report.

One person who attends every Council Meeting is our Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Jeff Radford. He thanked him particularly on behalf of all the Councillors and, indeed all the residents of the Parish, for all the efforts he puts in and his precision and attention to detail.

Conclusion

The Council will continue to move forward and as our slogan says “Caring for the Community” is what we do. This would not be possible without the comments and suggestions made by those parishioners who turn up regularly, in fair weather and foul, at our meetings and draw our attention to matters that might otherwise escape our attention.

OPEN FORUM

No items were raised under Open Forum.