

# **BLACKWELL PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Blackwell Parish Council held at Newton Community Centre, Newton on Monday 4 April 2016 at 7pm.

## **PRESENT**

Councillor. N J B Willens (Chairman)

Councillors: D G B Bullock: I G Cox: T J Gascoyne : S Gill: C R Moesby:  
A Naylor: I J A Newham: R A Poulter: R J Sainsbury and B Stocks:

## **ALSO PRESENT**

PCSO Paul Brownlee, Derbyshire Constabulary, and nine Parishioners

## **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs C Munks.

## **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13 April 2015 were approved and signed as a correct record.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2015/2016**

The Chairman reported to the Council regarding the activities carried out by the Blackwell Parish Council during the year 2015/2016. Counting the Council's year as starting in May, the Council began the year with something of a new look, with some new faces round the table. He was pleased to congratulate Councillor Adrian Naylor, Steve Gill and Tony Gascoigne on completing their first year of service. He still missed the presence and advice of Alan Tomlinson at meetings but was pleased to say that they were still represented at District Council level by Councillors Dexter Bullock and Clive Moesby and at County also by Clive. What would they do without him? This year he did not intend to report on the individual activities of all the community groups in the Parish. There were however a couple of things he would like to mention. The first is that Ian Newham has decided to step down as Chair of Blackwell Residents' Action Group and hand over to Steve Gill. He was pleased to report that both he and his wife Jan were still taking an active part in all the events put on by BRAG. The other is that efforts were being made to revive the fortunes of Westhouses Residents' Action Group under the leadership of Henry Frampton Jones and Chris Frost. The three Community Centres in Blackwell, Hilcote and Newton continued to

provide a focus for many of the activities in the Parish. They are well used on most days of the week but there are vacant slots especially at weekends. This had been mentioned in the quarterly Parish Council Newsletter but he still strongly commended consideration of their use for private functions. To make this offer even more attractive, the Council had just had each of them freshly decorated. After many delays, he was able to report that the first phase of development of play equipment at Charnwood Crescent Playing Fields had been completed. The Council was now working with Groundwork Creswell on planning for subsequent stages including outdoor gym equipment, a zip wire, picnic tables and marginal landscaping. This work includes the vital job of finding some external funding. Another project in the Parish which was approaching completion was the full opening of the Blackwell Trail. This is in the hands of Derbyshire County Council. There were still a few details to be sorted out with the contractors but a major step forward was the opening of the car park where the trail crosses Fordbridge Lane. This had taken ages to achieve and it must be recognised that it is only through the persistence of County Councillor Clive Moesby that he had achieved this before the full formal opening of the trail. He would be relieved that this will cease to be an item on the agenda of our monthly meetings. The Council are also approaching a conclusion in the attempt to take over the field in Pasture Lane, Hilcote which used to include the football field attached to Hilcote Miners' Welfare. The Parish Council will take over as sole corporate trustee, as they did of the Miners Welfare itself. They will then hand it over to the Hilcote Environmental and Leisure Project (HELP) who are planning to turn it into a nature reserve and woodland walk, under the name of Hilcote Royal Oak Meadow and Woodland.

The Parish Council was joining with HELP and BRAG in a project to measure the quality of water in Normanton Brook which forms the southern boundary of the parish. This is part of a larger project being run by a charity called Waterside Care sponsored by Severn Trent Water and the Environment Agency to identify the sources of pollution of the River Amber. A future project the Council had in our sights is one to take over what used to be the bowling green attached to Blackwell Miners' Welfare. This has become something of an overgrown eyesore. The idea is similar to the plan for the field in Pasture Lane, for the Parish Council to become sole corporate trustee and then to hand the green over to BRAG to develop as a leisure garden. A project that they were not keen to see proceed is the building of a further 80 houses on the field in Cragg Lane, next to the Newton Conservation Area. Most of the residents in the area had accepted the first phase of the Newton Fields development in the face of the need for extra housing, albeit reluctantly. It had also been understood that the second phase, behind Alfreton Road had been approved on the understanding that this was instead of building on the green field site next to Cragg Lane. The Parish Council had passed a resolution in January to oppose the third phase strongly on the grounds of the adverse effect on the Conservation Area, the

proposed highly dangerous vehicular and pedestrian access on to Cragg Lane and the change it would have on the village nature of Newton. With a 25% growth in the number of houses, it was feared that Newton would become a dormitory suburb without the advantage of an adjacent city or town centre. However, the decision rested with the Bolsover District Council with the risk that the receipt of £480,000 New Homes Bonus and an additional £12,000 in Council Tax each year would outweigh the opposition of the Parish Council and the local residents. He concluded his report by expressing his thanks to his fellow Councillor for their support throughout the year and their active support at Council Meetings. As he had done in previous years, and as is done by other local Parish Councils and at District and County levels, he would be drawing up a table with attendance at Parish Council meetings. This would be included in the written version of the report which would be included in the Summer edition of the Parish Council newsletter. He also wished to thank the Parish Caretaker, Richard Walker for his dedicated efforts across the Parish and the Caretakers at Community Centre's in Blackwell, Rita Mann, Hilcote, Val Wilson and Newton, Tracey Swallow. Last not least he wanted to thank the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Jeff Radford, for his unending support and encouragement.

### **OPEN FORUM**

There were no questions from the Parishioners present.