

BLEASBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

MONDAY 31 MAY 2022

7.30 pm in Bleasby Village Hall

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Michael Coombs, Chair of Bleasby Parish Council, and 19 residents

Cllr Coombs opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He said that it was his first meeting as Chair, having been elected at the Parish Council meeting on 23 May 2022. Cllr Coombs paid tribute to the outgoing Chair, Cllr Stephen Andersen, and thanked him for his work for the parish council and the community during his time in office.

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

2. To Receive and Approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14 July 2022.

These were approved and signed as a correct record, proposed Cllr Dunseath, seconded Cllr Roscoe, all in favour.

3. To Discuss any Matters Arising from those Minutes

The Christmas tree has now been planted in the Glebe Field, and the electricity supply has been extended to facilitate putting lights on the tree at Christmas.

4. Parish Council Accounts

These are currently being audited. Cllr Andersen reported that the financial position of the Parish Council is healthy, and the Council will be proceeding with plans to improve the amenities of the parish.

5. Parish Council Chair's Report

Cllr Coombs said that he had lived in Bleasby for 15 years now, and had been a member of the Parish Council for 8 years, and was elected Chair 7 days ago. He reiterated his thanks to Cllr Andersen, outgoing Chair, for his contribution to the parish council as Chair, and in particular for steering the council through the problems of the pandemic. He also thanked Ken and Lynda Ogilvie for their help to the Council, and thanked Cllr Roger Blaney and Cllr Sue Saddington for their support during the year.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, it had been possible for residents to enjoy access to the village footpaths, the Glebe Field, Ferry End and the Jubilee Ponds and he hoped that being close to nature had helped people during the strange period we have lived through.

During the last year the Grasshopper group has been formed and members of the group have been active in improving the green spaces in the parish. The community is now preparing for the Platinum Jubilee to celebrate HM Queen Elizabeth's 70 years as Queen.

There have been continuing problems with the railway crossing resulting in the barriers being stuck on several occasions. The Parish Council is grateful to both Cllr Saddington and Cllr Blaney for helping to get some action on this.

Cllr Coombs recorded special thanks to all the volunteers in the village – those who run the website, the Bleasby News, the litter pickers, those helping with support to neighbours who could not get out much, those involved in the green spaces initiative. And finally those who have offered support to Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees, some of whom have found refuge with families in Bleasby.

6. Village Hall Management Committee Report

Lynda Ogilvie, Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee represented this report.

She noted that the village hall had suffered with the pandemic having an impact on bookings and the finances of the hall. However, with the dedication of the management team, she felt that the hall had been managed well during the pandemic. Finances are healthy and letting income was good, considering the periods when the hall was closed.

Lynda thanked key members of the management committee including Alison and Edmund Salter, and also Viv Mayfield, but noted that all members played a vital role in keeping the hall functioning well, and making it an important asset for the parish.

7. Bleasby Play Group Report

Bleasby Play Group has had a great year and are now back in the village hall each week on Monday mornings. The children enjoy a variety of activities, such as the reading books, the music box, dolls and the dressing up box and the car garage. There is also always a snack for the children and a hot cup of tea for adults.

The group is grateful to be able to use the village hall, and the children always have a lovely morning.

8. Parochial Church Council (PCC) Report

Diana Temperley presented the PCC Report. She noted the implications of the pandemic and the challenges it had thrown up. There were times when it had been difficult to interpret the 'rules' issued by Government. However, St Mary's managed to keep in touch with congregations and parishioners in the Benefice, and were able to hold virtual services.

One issue which the PCC hopes can be addressed is the Churchyard, which is becoming difficult for volunteers to maintain. She hopes that the PCC and the PC can work together in the future to keep this beautiful green space in good order. There has been an abundance of kindness, generosity and thoughtfulness in the community

during the pandemic, and the Church community looks forward to a Platinum Jubilee celebration which will involve everyone and will build on this community spirit.

9. Green Spaces Report

Cllr Jo Dunseath presented this report. The Green Spaces group was set up last year to understand and capture knowledge of the various practices and tasks associated with managing the green spaces owned by the parish council. The group is currently preparing a report which will outline current practices and make suggestions for the future.

The group has a number of tasks to tackle but is a small group and will not be able to do everything. Jo encouraged those interested to come along to future work parties.

She thanked all the current volunteers, and in particular Chris Foster for his support.

10. Bleasby School Report

Presented by Russyn Cast, Head Teacher.

Russyn said she had been Head Teacher since January, and found the school a very pleasant place to work. The children are very well behaved and supported. Staff are committed to the well being of the children and the school. As well as academic subjects the children enjoy lot of sport and music.

There is a fall in the number of children at the school, and this reflects the national trend.

The school welcomes the opportunity to interact with the wider village community, and recent activities include an evacuation day, which all the children enjoyed.

11. Flood Action Group Report

Presented by Peter Cast

Peter noted that it had been a quiet year in terms of flood risk but the FAG group continues to monitor and maintain waterways. He reminded everyone that individuals were responsible for water courses on their property, whether above or below ground. The group is improving communication so that they can work more effectively with other parishes. This will help to give quick responses in times of need.

The group has a quantity of equipment which is kept up to date, with batteries checked, and new items ordered as needed.

12. District Council Report

Cllr Blaney was not in attendance so there was no report.

13. County Council Report

Cllr Saddington was not in attendance so there was no report.

14. Local History Report

Barbara Cast, President of the Bleasby Local History Society, presented her report.

She noted that the Society was not able to meet normally due to Covid restrictions, but have now been able to resume regular meetings in the village hall. Members have enjoyed a number of lectures on a variety of topics. Barbara encouraged new members to join but said that everyone could attend any of the lectures for a modest fee.

The BLHS meets at the village hall on the 4th Tuesday of the month.

15. Station Adoption Scheme

Jenny Sterland presented this report. There are three members of the group, and she is pleased to report the two planters have been installed, plus information boards. Members of the Grasshoppers group helped to clear land between the level cross and the gas governor kiosk.

16. Events Group Report

Cllr Sara Roscoe presented this report on behalf of Bobbie Desbruslais, Chair of the Events Group.

The Group has been very restricted during the year, but managed to stage some events. These include an Easter Trail which entailed children painting a stone (egg) and following a trail to find which nest was the one for their egg. Another event was 'Decorate your Gates' which encouraged residents to produce floral displays at the entrance to their homes.

The Bike Fest took place in September, and this was very well supported, with 60-70 children registering.

Advent windows – residents decorated and lit up their window during Advent and this created a trail through the village.

Christmas tree lighting took place, despite seasonal weather, and those who attended had a very enjoyable evening. An another Easter Trail was set up, this time around the Jubilee Ponds. Again, very enjoyable for those who took part.

17. Bleasby WI

Chris Harget presented this report. The WI continued to meet via 'Zoom', and also outside at the pub when permitted. Speakers were varied, including a talk on Somalia, 'Storm in a Teashop' and Bell Ringing.

Bleasby WI enters its 100th year shortly and there are lots of plans to celebrate this milestone event.

18. Any Other Business

A couple of matters were raised – it was suggested that the school sign at its entrance could be better placed on the opposite side, as its current possible would make negotiation by large lorries difficult.

Also it was suggested that the river needs dredging.

Cllr Coombs remarked on how interesting it was to hear about the various groups in the village and their activities. There being no further business, he thanked everyone for attending, and closed the meeting at 8.40 pm.