

BLEASBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Wednesday, 14 July 2021 in Bleasby Village Hall

Present: Cllr Stephen Andersen (in the Chair), Cllr Roger Blaney (NSDC), Cllr Sue Saddington (NCC) and 13 residents

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Chris and Roger Bennett

2. To Receive and Approve the Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting in 2019

No minutes for this meeting could be located, so they could not be approved.

3. To discuss any Matters Arising from those Minutes

This was not possible as there were no minutes available.

4. Parish Council Accounts

Chair reported that the Council was in a good position financially, primarily because of the effect of Covid-19 restrictions which had curtailed all planned activities. The Council has plans for some expenditure, including the purchase of a live Christmas tree to be permanently planted in the Glebe Field, the installation of wiring and the purchase of new lights.

There were no questions on the Accounts.

5. Parish Council Chair's Report

Cllr Andersen said that the Council had continued to hold regular meetings via Zoom technology during the pandemic. The Council is up to full strength, with seven councillors and all are playing their part in contributing to the work of the Council. The former Clerk, Karen Green, had resigned her position at the end of April, and the Council is very grateful to Lynda Ogilvie for stepping into the breach while a new Clerk is recruited. Cllr Andersen also thanked Ken Ogilvie for dealing with the accounts and ensuring that all the Council's finances are in good order.

He also thanked Barbara Cast and Rachael Andrews for their many years editing the Bleasby News, and welcomed the new editorial team which will ensure that the Bleasby News continues to be the main conduit of information in the parish.

There has been a growth in volunteer groups in the parish. These include the events group, the Jubilee Ponds group, and Green Spaces group. The Council is also looking at providing some small scale play equipment at the Glebe Field, and has engaged Nottingham City Council to help with the process of consulting with residents, developing a plan of what is appropriate and making grant funding applications.

Cllr Andersen said that the primary objective of the Parish Council is to enhance and protect the village and ensure that it continues to be a good place to live.

6. Village Hall Management Committee Report

Lynda Ogilvie, Chair of Bleasby Village Hall Management Committee gave this report.

The hall had to be closed during the pandemic, which resulted in a catastrophic loss of income. Ongoing costs still continued, including insurance, water and electricity. Costly electrical work had also needed to be undertaken. But fortunately the hall was able to benefit from available grants, and this had helped to create a good buffer.

We had all had to get to grips with the Covid-19 rules appertaining to village halls, and plan how to keep people safe on the few occasions when we were able to open to users.

Members of the committee had rallied round and kept the hall clean and tidy ready to welcome people back in. Special thanks were given to Alison and Edmund Salter for their sterling work during the year – Alison for being Secretary and Edmund for dealing with so many practical matters - to Viv Mayfield for taking care of finances and keeping the flower trough a delight to look at, to Ken Ogilvie for auditing the books, and for all committee members for their support in whatever form, during the year.

Finally, it was a pleasure to let people know that the hall now has WiFi available, and it is hoped that this will be of benefit to hirers of the hall, and may encourage further lettings.

7. PCC Report

Diana Temperley presented this report.

So many projects had to be put on hold during the year due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. However, the pandemic provided the opportunity of new initiatives and demonstrated the strength of community in the village. It was not possible to go to church in the usual manner, but Zoom services were soon established, and there are frequently more than 70 people from the seven churches taking part. Members of the congregation made regular phone calls to each other and those living alone, and tried to ensure that people were not forgotten. Initiatives such as the food bank requests, and the Community Action Response Team were supported. As the restrictions of the pandemic lift, consideration will be given to decide the way forward, always aiming to provide a safe environment for all who come to church.

Safeguarding issues are being brought into line with the standard required, and there is a clear structure to be followed if any complaints or reports of inappropriate behaviour are made.

Links with the school have had to be put on hold, but it is hoped that these will improve in the coming months.

The churchyard has been kept in good order by a group of wonderful volunteers, under the guidance of Ali Sutherland. But more volunteers are always welcome. The wonderful reaction of this parish to the problems caused by Covid-19 has shown how strong the community spirit is, and the kindness, care and thoughtfulness that has been demonstrated is proof that these qualities are alive and well in Bleasby.

The church hopes to build on this spirit, and continue to serve the community well into the future.

8. Greenspaces/Jubilee Ponds Engagement group report

Cllr J Dunseath presented this report

This is a fledgling group designed to capture the knowledge of the Jubilee Ponds, Glebe Field, and Ferry End, and to encourage engagement with the community in maintaining and developing these sites. There are a small number of volunteers at the moment, and the intention is to solicit advice on managing these areas from professional agencies, and to develop a 5-year rolling plan on best practice management.

The Jubilee Ponds group works in close partnership with the Carp Syndicate, and there will be a Jubilee Ponds Engagement day on 17 July 2021, with a variety of 'stations' around the ponds aimed at informing residents of the history, and flora and fauna of the area and encourage greater recognition of what a valuable asset the village has with the ponds.

Jo thanked those people who have contributed to the project.

9. Bleasby School

Peter Cast presented this report, as the Chair of Governors was unable to attend due to the need to isolate.

Peter reported that the Head Teacher is stepping down, and will be greatly missed. He has shown dedication and commitment to the school. It is expected that a new Head Teacher will be appointed in December. Bleasby School has strong connection with the Minster School, and this is working well. It was pleasing to see how well parents responded to the travails of the pandemic, and only one class has been sent home because of infection.

10. Flood Action Group

Peter Cast presented this report

FAG continues to monitor the water way systems in the parish, and responds where appropriate. It was ironic to note that flooding has some benefits to wildlife. There are 10 FAG volunteers, all of whom have been trained as Wardens. There are also others who turn out when needed, so that the parish continues to maintain its resilience to flooding.

Weather patterns continue to be unpredictable. Sewerage systems in some areas of the parish are inadequate. Peter reminded everyone of the Pitt report, which suggested that we all need to change our way of living in order to deal with some of these issues.

11. District Council Report

Cllr Roger Blaney said that this would be his 33rd attendance at an Annual Parish Meeting in Bleasby, and it was always the best attended of all the meetings in his 'patch'.

The last 18 months had been a strain on everyone, not least those working at the District Council who had been required to change their work patterns in order to address the challenges of the pandemic. The district council had developed Humanitarian Assistance Response Team (HART), which had been supporting people and businesses throughout the district. The District Council had also made a significant distribution of grants to businesses in the area.

As normality returns, the district council hopes to establish a one-stop-shop at Castle House, bringing together a number of organisations and facilities, including the police, under one roof.

The district Council deals with a large number of planning applications, and Cllr Blaney referred to some in Bleasby which are causing concern, and explained the position of the planning office in dealing with these.

He also addressed concerns which have been registered by many residents regarding the changed train timetable, which leaves Bleasby with virtually no usable commuter trains into Nottingham or Newark/Lincoln. This matter is being raised with EM Trains, and Cllr Blaney hopes that there will be a satisfactory resolution. It was noted that Bleasby is the sixth least used station in Nottinghamshire.

12. County Council Report

Cllr Sue Saddington noted that the elections in May had been most unusual, as it was impossible to canvass. She was pleased to have been re-elected, and is now Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee. Nottinghamshire County Council has a new leader, Ben Bradley MP, and an influx of younger members, leading to a very enthusiastic new team. Bruce Laughton is Deputy Leader, and Roger Jackson is Vice Chair.

Sue has been in discussion with Network Rail regarding the unacceptable number of times the railway line barriers are down, sometimes causing residents in the area to be isolated, and unable to attend appointments. She will continue to put pressure on Network Rail to improve this situation.

Sue spoke about the arrangements for a southern link road between Farndon and the A1, and the dualling of the A46 – the latter has become less certain as costs are rising significantly.

Sue thanked villagers for their support, and looks forward to continuing to work with communities in her 'patch'.

13. History Society Report

This was presented by Barbara Cast, President of Bleasby Local History Society.

Barbara noted that this was the first time that BLHS had been invited to present a report to the Annual Parish Meeting. The Society had been formed 35 years ago, and as well as hosting monthly lectures, the Society also holds recording days, undertakes research, and organises visits to places of historic interest and

importance, including parks and gardens in Nottinghamshire. It has also produced a number of publications which are available for a very small cost. There is now a very small group of enthusiasts running the Society, and new members would always be welcome to join, or to attend individual lectures.

14. Any Other Business

Cllr Dunseath reminded everyone of the Jubilee Ponds engagement day to be held on Saturday 17 July, and encouraged everyone to attend.

Peter Cast thanked the members of the Parish Council for their work in, and commitment to, the village.

Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.10 pm

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