

PARISH OF SPALDWICK

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held at 8 pm Wednesday 30 April 2008 at Spaldwick Primary School

Present Councillors K H Armer (Chairman), W Brown, R Johnson, B Plummer, J Pope, R Wooddisse, five members of the public and the Parish Clerk (Mr D Stowell)

An apology for absence was received from Cllr J Shears.

1. **Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held 25 April 2007** - were read, approved and signed.

2. **Matters arising** - none

3. **Annual Report by Chairman of Parish Council**

Cllr Armer reported as follows :-

The Council held 12 meetings in the year, 9 full, 1 Public, 1 Planning Committee and the Annual Parish Meeting. Members of the public attended all but one of those meetings.

At the Council meeting on 19 July 2007 Nick Ball of Cambs ACRE addressed the meeting regarding the advantages of having a Parish Plan. 19 members of the public attended and almost unanimously voted in favour of proceeding with a Parish Plan.

A Public Meeting, attended by 22 members of the public, was held on 18 October 2007 to launch the Plan and form a steering group. Cllrs Plummer and Pope represent the Parish Council on the group.

The Council dealt with 15 matters of planning over the year.

The Council again made bids to the HDC / CCC Traffic Management Area Joint Committee for Jointly Funded Minor Improvement Schemes to complete the footway from Ivy Way to Beech House and for traffic calming measures at the east end of the village. These were turned down as they did not score sufficient points when marked by the assessing team. Cllr Plummer and myself carried out a traffic survey on 18 June to support the bid. In my opinion the assessing team have no idea where this road is and that it is at the end of a high speed slip road. We have also looked at funding speed cameras ourselves but found that this is not allowed. We have not given up and will continue to try to get these improvements.

The Council is still liaising with the Village Hall Management Committee in trying to purchase or lease land for the new hall.

The standard of grasscutting was again very poor over the year, and we received a large number of complaints. We have appointed a new contractor for the coming year, so the problem should be resolved.

The Council raised the precept to £8900 for 2008/09. This was to allow for increasing costs and a balance to be carried over to 2009/10 to finance future projects, and also to allow for a donation of 50p per elector to the East Anglia Air Ambulance.

Again there is a big problem with flytipping within the parish and we report this to HDC as soon as it is reported to us. Also there have been large amounts of litter deposited within the parish. We have arranged litter pick ups with HDC, but it is almost impossible to keep up with, as is dog fouling, not only in the village but also in adjacent grass fields.

We distributed the Christmas charities to 7 residents of Spaldwick.

Councillors have attended a number of external meetings / courses in the past year, but overall it has been a quiet year.

Finally I would like to thank Mr Stowell for all his work keeping us abreast of all matters and for his skills in the treasury department; Mr Brown and Mr Johnson for delivering the charities; Mr Johnson for his work as tree warden; Mr Shears for inspecting the play equipment and all the Councillors for their hard work in the past year.

4. **Parish Council Financial Report**

The Clerk presented the accounts for the year 2007 / 2008, summarised as follows :-

	Parish Council Fund	Charity Fund
Balance brought forward at 1/4/07	£44007.53	£120.00
Receipts	£12994.35	£120.00
Payments	£ 5946.32	£120.00
Balance carried forward at 31/3/08	£51055.56	£120.00

The Parish Council balance at 31 March 2008 is allocated as follows :-

Contribution to Village Hall & Playing Field project	£20000.00
Ferriman Road Grounds Maintenance Fund	£21443.87
Production of Parish Plan	£1500.00
General Reserve	£8111.69

5. **Reports from other village organisations**

Mr B Plummer reported on the following :-

Village Hall

The difficulties in obtaining a site for the village hall remain the major stumbling block. Although negotiations are continuing, approval for vehicle access to the area behind the school remains a limit on progress. Advice from the planning authorities concerning possible alternative sites around the village is being taken, but these options are extremely limited.

Investment of the Village Hall funds continues to draw interest and the total now stands at: £235000.

The furniture and crockery from the old Hall remain in store and are available for use by the village members.

Carpet Bowls Club

The club continues to hold its regular club nights in the school hall every Tuesday evening during term time.

Membership remains sufficient to maintain a lively club and cover the costs of hiring the hall, however, new members would be most welcome, particularly from within the village.

League and Presidents day competitions have again proved successful as have a number of social events and the club continues to hold its own in matches with other village clubs.

Spaldwick Community Room Users Association

The Community room at Spaldwick School has again continued to function smoothly and although its use has increased slightly it remains somewhat under-utilised.

It is a village facility, which includes both the meeting room and kitchen catering for up to 50 people and is available for hire for both group and private functions.

Parish Plan.

The proposal to produce a Spaldwick Parish Plan was approved at a Parish public meeting on 18th October 2007 and a Steering Group of six volunteer residents and two Parish council members was formed. The purpose of the plan is to set out the views of the community concerning the future development of the village and to develop an action plan to guide the appropriate authorities.

The Group has held meetings on eight occasions since it was formed and, supported by ACRE advisers, has focussed on preparing a questionnaire for circulation to all households within the village. This is the first critical step in the formulation of the Parish Plan. It is expected that the questionnaire will be ready for distribution shortly and that the Parish Plan will be completed by the end of the year.

Mr Stowell reported on the Community Access Point (CAP)

This facility comprising two computers in the Community Room is available on Mondays from 1.15 - 3.00 pm. Anyone wishing to use the CAP to access the internet or wishing for training in the use of computers should contact David Stowell on 890065, who will arrange to be in attendance to advise.

6. **Open Forum**

Bus Shelters - Mr Armer said that the shelter outside The George was now in a dangerous state and beyond repair so will have to be demolished. As buses no longer stop there it will not be replaced. The Parish Council is trying to establish where a new shelter should be located. It is consulting with the County Council (regarding routing of the various services) and the District Council (regarding location of bus stops and provision of signs and a shelter)

Village Hall - Mrs Dearman raised a number of questions regarding the composition and meetings of the Village Hall Management Committee to which Mr Plummer replied. She suggested that before the Parish Plan questionnaire is issued a newsletter should be issued by the Management Committee explaining the current position regarding the proposed new village hall.

In response to a question from Mr Stowell, Mr Plummer confirmed that approximately £1000 was received annually by the VHMC from credits arising from the recycling of bottles, cans and newspapers collected at the mini-recycling centre.

Dates of Parish Council meetings - Mr Dearman suggested that the dates of Parish Council meetings should be announced in the Village newsletter, to encourage more people to attend. Mr Armer said the Parish Council would consider this, but pointed out that meetings have to re-scheduled from time to time.

Land between Ferriman Road and school bus turning area - Mrs Dearman pointed out that this is very untidy and suggested that it should be tidied up before the Open Gardens day.

Maintenance of Community Room - in response to a question from Mrs Armer, Mr Plummer advised that the school is responsible for repairing / replacing chairs etc. from the fees paid by users.

Charity Fund - Mr Adams queried whether it might be better to put the money to some other use instead of distributing it to elderly individuals, whose needs are unknown. Mr Brown said that the recipients of the Charity at Christmas are most appreciative of the gifts. The suggestion will be passed to the Parish Council.

7. **Thanks to Chairman and Clerk**

Mr Brown expressed thanks to Mr Armer, Chairman of the Parish Council and Mr Stowell, Clerk for the the work they had done during the past year.

In the absence of any other business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.26 pm