

## WALTON PARISH MEETING

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall, School Lane, Walton on Tuesday 25 April 2017 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillor E Fairclough (Chair); approx 15 Local Electors including Councillors: J Carlon, P Lee, E Prince, K Rolinson, T Saunders, K Shaw, H Massey and C Wagstaff.

**In attendance:** M Cummings (WMDC), F Heptinstall & the two Clerks to the Council.

1. **Apologies for absence** received from Cllrs A Manifold (WMDC), Sue Birkby and C Pearson (Walton Parish Council).

2. **To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016.**  
Copies of the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016 were circulated before the meeting commenced. The meeting accepted the minutes as a true record and they were signed by the Chair as such.

3. **Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.**  
There were none.

4. **Chairman's report on activities 2016/17.**

The Chair began her report by celebrating the many new and exciting initiatives since the previous year. The new support group "Working For Walton" has achieved a lot for the benefit of the people of Walton in such a short time, and the team are to be warmly congratulated for this. To help them have a good start the Parish Council gave permission to use the Village Hall for the "Scarecrow Festival" events, they recently held their first A.G.M. and paid for the electrical installations for the "Tree Lighting" ceremony last December. Now momentum has been gained, the Council sincerely hopes the group goes from strength to strength.

One group which has also supported this village so efficiently since its inception in 1997 is the West Yorkshire Police Safe Scheme. The first year's contribution from us was £8000 and crime was reduced by 33% on the previous year. The rules of engagement set down then by Sgt. Jim Hopkins were the same as now, overseen instead by Acting Sgt. Matt Jackson and his team of dedicated officers. The Parish Council have agreed to continue the scheme and resolved to contribute £6000 to the scheme in 2017 / 18.

The Village Hall has been part of a rolling programme of refurbishments with two new outer doors, block paving and a notice board. The diseased elm tree was removed from the front, and we now intend to plant new trees in the Recreation Ground this summer. The benches and seats around the village are being re-furbished and upgraded along with some of the playground equipment in the Recreation ground. The Village Hall is very well used by many different groups all year round. When two of the heaters in this room were condemned earlier this year, the Parish Council had to act quickly to get them replaced so that none of the hirings would be cancelled.

The floral displays on the lampposts around the village were again very pretty and appreciated by so many residents and visitors. We are very grateful to all our sponsors, old and new and hope they will continue to support us in the future.

The local Ward Councillors – Maureen Cummings, Albert Manifold and Faith Heptinstall continue to support the Parish Council on many matters – not just planning issues. They have reserved funding from W.M.D.C. for two Variable Message Signs (V.M.S.). Vehicles speeding in this village have always been a problem and it seems to get worse, despite the installation of traffic – calming measures some years ago. To assist us in our battle against the speeding offenders, one set of signs will be placed near Nine Arches Bridge on Shay Lane, and the other on Oakenshaw Lane close to the old railway bridge on the way in from Doncaster Road. The Parish Council are most grateful for the Councillors 'assistance on any matters which concern the people of Walton.

Building developments are still in progress, albeit some slower than others. The old Junior School site has now been purchased by a development company from Wetherby who plan to build fewer more acceptable units than the previous developers.

The relocation of West Yorkshire Sports and Social Club to Brook Farm is still in negotiation with the developer and W.M.D.C. Members of the Parish Council's Planning Group are heavily involved and will endeavour to ensure the best outcome is achieved for the village with specific regard to the stipulations in the Neighbourhood Plan and have emphasised the implications of it to all parties.

Work has begun on the Close Care Community project on the land off The Grove. The developer Keepmoat has engaged with the Parish Council and Walton Academy Year 6 children to provide the names of the site's ten streets. The Headteacher asked the children to undertake a research project in the Easter holidays to find suitable names with a historical link to the village and the Waterton family. Prizes will be awarded to the children whose street names are chosen, and the results will be announced in the next few weeks.

The Chair thanked all her fellow Parish Councillors who work hard for the village and acknowledged their commitment and for caring what happens within the village. Two loyal servants of Walton Parish Council – David Pickover and Graham Glenn left last year. They were replaced by Karen Rolinson and Chris Wagstaff who are very welcome additions to the Council. Paul Readman the Caretaker and Groundsman keeps the Village Hall, Recreation Ground and the War Memorial looking smart and tidy, and the Chair thanked him for all he does.

Finally, the Chair announced the sad news that David Plaut, the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer was leaving his post at the end of this month. The Chair acknowledged David is in a class of his own. She explained since his appointment in August 2006, David had transformed the administrative and financial management of the Parish Council. He had quietly and efficiently been able to instil a confidence in our knowledge that what the Council had resolved was correct, and its aspirations for the future of the village were achievable and legitimate. The Chair acknowledged his direction and advice was always well - founded and assured. David had always been able to manage the comparatively small budget with foresight and reliance. The Council wished him and his family all the very best for the future.

In the Council's search for David's replacement we are very fortunate to have engaged the services of Marianne Haworth. The Chair explained she has an accountancy degree and is also a qualified solicitor. Consequently we are delighted that she has agreed to take up this position. Marianne is a former resident of Walton and is very familiar with our village. The Parish Council welcome her and wish her every success in her new role.

The Chair ended by thanking all those who attended and hoped they will continue to give their valued support to safeguard the village and all its assets now, and in the future.

## **5. Financial Statements 2015/16 and 2016/17.**

The Clerk thanked the Chair for her kind comments and noted the Council would not have achieved all that it had without her input. The Clerk also gave thanks to Paul Readman, the caretaker, for all the hard work he has given the council, going over and beyond.

1. 2015/16 Copies of the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31.03.16 were included in circulated documents. This last two pages form part of the Annual Return in the format required by Audit and Accounting Regulations. It was approved by the external auditor and was publicly displayed as required last August. The figures are shown again in a different format in the Budget and Accounts summary for the following year which are more meaningful.

2. 2016/17 Copies of a Budget and Accounts Summary were circulated showing the actual figures for 2015/16, the budget for 2016/17, draft final figures for 2016/17 and the budget for 2017/18. The Clerk pointed out the increase of £1202 in fund balance between 01.04.16 and 31.03.17. He explained that there was an overspend of approx. £8,400 than budgeted for two new external doors, a new notice board, two new heaters and new tables and chairs for the toddler group. This is counter balanced by a reduction in the amount spent than budgeted by approx. £7000. The Clerk explained less was spent on the SAFE scheme than budgeted and £5,000 had been set aside, which is yet to be spent on the refurbishment of the playground on the recreation ground. Finally, income from hirings and support from the floral displays were higher than expected. He invited questions or comments but there were none.

**6. Information about the Neighbourhood Plan and the progress made since the adoption of the plan.**

Councillor Helen Massey reported the Neighbourhood Plan has had the desired impact on planning decisions. Cllrs have worked hard to make sure the Parish are informed about planning applications and the Neighbourhood Plan is implemented. Cllr Massey reported several applications submitted which were within the Historic Core have not referred or complied to the Neighbourhood Plan which had been highlighted to WMDC.

Cllr Massey explained the wish list of projects at the back of the Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed and progressed as soon as funding allowed. WMDC had pledged a sum of money from the Brook Farm development and a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be payable because of the redevelopment at the former junior school site. The Council should recover the maximum possible amount of CIL from this development due to the adoption of the NP. Other events should also progress once money is received.

Councillor Karen Rolinson explained lots of work is being done in the background in preparation to when funding is received. Cllr Rolinson highlighted there were also free events which many residents had taken part in including the May litter pick.

Discussion took place over why CIL did not apply to the Grove development and relocation of the sports club to Brook Farm. Cllr Lee explained CIL only came into force in April 2016 which is after the planning decisions were approved for the Grove and Brook Farm.

**7. Observations from Parish Electors.**

Electors made the following comments or queries:

- i Was there any movement on the planning application at 154 Shay Lane. Cllr Lee reported the Council reviewed the plans and commented that it felt the materials proposed were not within the aspirations of the Historic Core and they are currently awaiting a response from the planning authority.
- ii Comment was made in recognition of the Councillors hard work and that it was much appreciated. There is a strong community spirit. The Chair acknowledged and gave thanks for the observation.
- iii The Chair formally thanked David in recognition of his hard work and services to the Parish over the 10 years. The Chair also thanked David's wife, Judy for her support. David thanked the Councillors and expressed how he would miss his work, Paul and the Council

**8. Conclusion.**

The Chair thanked those attending and concluded the meeting at 8.10 pm.