

## **WALTON PARISH MEETING**

### **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall, School Lane, Walton on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Councillor E Fairclough (Chairman); approx 30 Local Electors including  
Councillors: S Birkby, J Carlon, G Glenn, P Lee, C Pearson, E Prince and K Shaw.

**In attendance:** Councillors: H Massey (Walton Parish Council) and M Cummings (WMDC), &  
the Clerk to the Council.

1. **Apologies for absence** received from Cllrs: F Heptinstall and A Manifold (WMDC).

2. **To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015.**

Copies of the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015 were circulated before the meeting commenced. The meeting accepted the minutes as a true record and they were signed by the Chairman as such.

3. **Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.**

There were none.

4. **Chairman's report on activities 2015/16.**

The Chairman began her report by celebrating the formal adoption of the Walton Neighbourhood Plan following a successful referendum of the village in December.

She paid tribute to the three years of very hard work by all those involved in creating the Neighbourhood Plan which is a most significant piece of legislation for the future of the village and which allows for a greater influence on planning decisions made by WMDC.

She thanked them for their dedicated efforts which stand as a shining example of what can be achieved by a small community with vision and passion. The achievement has won the respect not just of the members of WMDC but of many other Councils and leads the way in Yorkshire proving what a formidable community Walton is.

The Safe Scheme in Walton, which has been running for nearly twenty years, is a special partnership with the police who patrol the village and provide extra security at a time of difficulty for the police forces of the country. The scheme will be continued for at least another year with the dedicated team under the control of Acting Sgt. Matt Jackson.

The rolling programme of refurbishment of the Village Hall has continued with the redecoration of the Committee Room and several photos of the village by Jonathan Barr have been framed and hung on the walls.

Two new outer doors will be fitted once the diseased elm tree which is outside the front door is removed and the block paving there will be re-laid.

The Parish Council paid for, and very recently took delivery of, new tables and chairs for use by the children's groups to replace the previous heavy and outdated ones.

The summer floral displays enhance the streets of the village and thanks are due to those sponsoring them. New sponsors have come forward for this summer and more would be welcomed to allow for even more baskets.

Following unwarranted and unfair criticism from some parishioners over the lack of a Christmas Tree, the Parish Council provided the funding to install a tree with lights which WMDC had funded in previous years.

The proposed development of the old Junior School is currently on hold because the owner died. Information about the family's intentions is awaited. Those responsible for the site's maintenance are being pressed by the Parish Council to keep it in order.

The Grove site has seen some activity by developers and construction is expected to begin very soon.

The Parish Council Working Parties look after all the assets of the village, as well as planning matters, environmental improvements and all the trees on the Council's property. Each Working Party consists of several Parish Councillors and the Chairman thanked them all for their continued dedication to the workings of the village.

The Chairman also thanked the Ward Councillors, Maureen Cummings, Albert Manifold and Faith Heptinstall; the Caretaker and Groundsman, Paul Readman; and the Parish Clerk, David Plaut.

The Chairman ended by thanking all those attending with the hope that they will continue to support all those who strive to safeguard the village and its wonderful assets, now and in the future.

## **5. Financial Statements 2014/15 and 2015/16.**

1. 2014/15 Copies of the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31.03.15 were included in circulated documents. This page forms 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.

2. 2015/16 Copies of a Budget and Accounts Summary were circulated showing the actual figures for 2014/15, the budget for 2015/16, draft final figures for 2015/16 and the budget for 2016/17.

The Clerk pointed out the increase of £662 in fund balance between 01.04.15 and 31.03.16.

He explained that this position was better than that budgeted for and gave some of the reasons for what had contributed to the better position. He invited questions or comments but there were none.

## **6. Information about the Working for Walton group and their activities.**

Karen Rolinson introduced the Working for Walton Group by explaining that it was a community group set up to enthuse and inspire the people of Walton to work together with the Parish Council and other groups for the benefit of the village.

Wendy Parker, secretary of the group, said that there are currently 14 people on the committee with one more vacancy and that the catalyst for starting the group was a scarecrow competition in Sandal. Members of the group felt that Walton could organise similar events since there had been Walton events in the past such as the Walton Gala.

Invitations to the whole community were sent out for interested people to meet at the beginning of January at the New Inn where it was decided to formally launch the group at a coffee morning at the end of February and to write a constitution and a mission statement. Leaflets to publicise the launch were delivered to every household.

At the launch event, 130 people attended and they were asked what events they wanted in Walton. 66 suggestions were posted on an 'ideas board' and £335 raised from cake stalls, raffles etc. to be used for future events.

To keep momentum going, it was decided to hold an event each month. A board games coffee morning, in conjunction with the library, was held at the beginning of April and a coffee morning is being held on St George's day to launch an online calendar of events and to share ideas.

There are a large number of different activities going on in Walton yet there is no central place where people can become aware of what is going on. The calendar of events will help in this respect and a Facebook page and an e-mail address have been set up.

Karen Rolinson said that a lot had already been achieved in four months and future events include a litter pick in May and an AGM in June where the Constitution will be voted on. In July, the group will help in the open garden event and in September there will be a scarecrow competition which is planned to be on the same day as Sandal's to give a wider area for people to visit. There will be a coffee morning in October and support for the wreath laying ceremony in November. In December, there will be a festival to celebrate Christmas with a fair, a tree and lights.

Karen Rolinson and Wendy Parker were thanked for their initiative.

## **7. Information about the Neighbourhood Plan and the implications of the adoption of the plan.**

Councillor Helen Massey reported that after three years and eight months, Walton's Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted. Two other Plans have been started in the Wakefield District and there are many in progress in Leeds, some of which started before Walton's, but Walton's Plan can be considered the first in Yorkshire.

She expressed pride for the effort put in, not just from the Steering Group, but also from all the residents who gave so much feedback during the questionnaire and consultation stages.

The Plan is a straightforward document in some respects which details what the village wants.

The referendum on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, a date which had to be fought for since WMDC wanted to postpone it till February, showed a high level of involvement with 34.1% of the electorate voting. Of the 890 who voted, 849 said 'Yes', 39 said 'No' and there were 2 spoilt ballot papers. This was a resounding success.

Because £8,000 was received in the form of grants, very little had to come out of Parish Council funds.

Helen Massey said she couldn't thank Dave Rolinson enough for all the work he did in writing the Plan.

## **8. Observations from Parish Electors.**

Electors made the following comments or queries:

- i Is the Parish Council aware that accreditation to 'Walkers Are Welcome' - an innovative community-led scheme - could allow grants to be applied for to help community projects? - the Parish Council will follow up this lead.
- ii The development plans for The Grove included road widening as part of the scheme and there has been some activity on the site. What is happening? - David Barraclough still owns the site, and a handover to Keepmoat is said to be imminent. Some surveys needed to be re-done as they were out of date. It appears residents are not being kept informed but at least the horses have disappeared from the field.
- iii Is there to be a nature trail along the railway line? - The railway line is not going to be a footpath or trail, it is a wildlife corridor created as a result of a heritage and wild life survey, and will protect the area if the railway line should cease.

- iv There is such a lot happening in the village, not only regular events, but also one off events. Making people aware of all that goes on in the village is a challenge and because not everyone is online, would the Parish Council be supportive of the idea of a Parish Newsletter. Would the Parish Council contribute to the cost if one were set up? - a newsletter requires considerable input from one person and the previous newsletter was abandoned because of lack of this support.
- v Maybe a notice board centrally placed in the village could be considered? - Not everyone is interested in finding out about all the events and activities in the village. The reality is that people lead busy lives and only when there is a particularly emotive issue is there a great deal of interest generated.
- vi Should there be a deputy attendant for the school crossing when the current one is away? - this is a matter for the District Council, but it seems hard to recruit new people.

**9. Conclusion.**

The Chair thanked those attending and concluded the meeting at 8.40 pm.