

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of **Shincliffe** held in Shincliffe Primary School, High Shincliffe, Durham on **Tuesday 20 May 2014 at 6.30 pm.**

PRESENT: Councillor Duell (in the Chair) and Councillors Hudson, A Lee, G Lee, Lightley and Lovell.

APOLOGIES: were received from Councillor Olechnowicz.

1. Minutes

It was **resolved:** That the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21 May 2013 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Parish Council Annual Report

This report is about Parish Council activities in the period April 2013 to end of March 2014. Details of all activity can be found in the copies of minutes held by the Clerk.

There were 11 monthly meetings of the PC as well as the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2013 and meetings of the Horticultural Committee.

Local elections held in May 2013 resulted in a substantial change of membership of the Parish Council. Councillors John Lightly and Pat Hudson were re-elected and Councillors David Duell, Angela Lee, George Lee, Andrzej Olechnowicz and Jonathan Lovell (representing Bell Ward) were all elected for the first time. The turnout was 46%.

County Councillor David Stoker now represents the Parish and has been in attendance at the great majority of PC meetings. His input, perspective and help on issues have been very useful and much valued.

As a result of the completion of the DCC Community Governance Review in the autumn of 2013 the Bell Ward was transferred to Cassop-cum-Quarington Parish Council in March. Councillor Lovell will remain as a member of Shincliffe Parish Council until his term of office expires.

The Clerk to the Parish Council, Helen Simpson resigned her post, taking effect on August 31st 2013. In the three months notice period a replacement position was advertised and Kate Cuthbert was appointed from a strong field of applicants in good time to ensure a seamless continuity of service to the Parish Council.

Finance

The Parish Council is to maintain the Parish Precept for 2014/15 at this year's level.

Community Activities

The Church and Community Association continued to publish their regular newsletters distributed to all residents in the Parish. Councillors were able to contribute to these and they continue to be a very useful source of information about events and local services and issues.

The History Society continued to offer a varied programme of talks and events. Coffee mornings were held in the village hall and our local primary school pupils provided concerts and events for residents and family members.

The two existing halls in the village are available for hire and provide reasonable facilities. The WI is well established and meets regularly. Their facility is used by others for "keep fit", dancing and Slimming World. The Church Hall is home to the History Society, Pilates, Wigglets, Carpet Bowls, Baby and Toddler group and Parish Council meetings (4 times a year).

The Environment

Two "litter-picks" were held during the year. The work of the volunteers concerned in helping to clear pathways and verges is much appreciated.

The Parish Council Gardens Competition was held in the summer. The Parish itself won a Beautiful Durham award due to the efforts of Marc Platts, the Horticultural Committee and residents. A survey of the trees on the village green area of Shincliffe Village has been carried out and remedial work will be done as necessary.

The damaged recreation park wall in Shincliffe Village has been an ongoing problem over the year. Wrangles over ownership, insurance and responsibility for repair, not to mention builders failing to turn up, have all led to delays in rebuilding. This should finally be underway in May. Dog fouling continues to be an issue – especially on the Old Mine site paths. It appears that there are still some irresponsible dog owners in the area who are not willing to clean up after their animals – despite many signs asking them to do so.

Roads and Paths

The winter was not severe and salt bins were well maintained. Many pot holes have been repaired by the County Council but some still remain to be filled and are on the "for action" list. Several street lights were reported as malfunctioning over the winter and the majority of these were repaired quickly.

A solution to the problem of excessive morning rush hour traffic through the Village is under active consideration by the County Council. The issue of traffic speeding past the A177 junction with High Shincliffe creating problems for traffic wishing to join the main road is also being investigated by the County Council.

Bus Service

Over the year the service was curtailed from four (sometimes five) buses an hour to two (sometimes three) buses per hour stopping in High Shincliffe. Without further subsidy or increased numbers of passengers this reduced service is likely to remain for the foreseeable future.

Crime

Incidents of reported crime in the Parish remain low. Unfortunately our local police contacts were unable to attend any PC meeting over the year.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk, all Councillors and residents for their efforts and support throughout the year.

4. Draft Council Accounts 2013/14

Opening Balance was £9,674.28, total income was £17,021.62 and total expenditure £14,697.03. A balance of £11,998.87 has been carried forward to 2014/15. Full accounts to be approved at the parish council meeting.

5. Observations of County Councillor

The County Councillor did not submit a report.

6. Any Other Business

No issues were raised.

The meeting terminated at 6.50 pm