

EAST BRIDGFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT 7.30 PM ON THURSDAY 20th APRIL 2017 IN THE W.I. HUT

Present:

Chairman: Cllr P Clarke
Guests: Cllr Kay Cutts - Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
Cllr Nigel Lawrence - Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC)
Mrs Patsy Andrews and Mr Richard Mackie - Community Plan group

Other village residents

Councillors :-

PA Clarke Chair (Recreation and Amenities Committee, Executive Committee (also Bowls Club)
T Strutt (Recreation and Amenities Committee, Executive Committee and also St Peter's Academy)
DD Atkins (Recreation and Amenities Committee, Executive Committee, Playing Field and Pavilion Committee, also Community Plan Group and Methodist Chapel)
KN Hall (Playing Fields and Pavilion Committee, Executive Committee, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee)
DC Meylan (Allotments and Open Spaces Committee)
JR Turner (Playing Fields and Pavilion Committee, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee)
M Verner (Playing Fields and Pavilion Committee)

EMF Temple Deputy Clerk (also South Notts Hockey Club)
Mrs J Molineaux (Minutes Secretary)

From St Peter's Church

MW Clarke (also Care Group, Drama Group, Village Hall Management Committee, and Horticultural Society)
Mr I Hylton-Bailey
Mrs J Hylton-Bailey (also W.I.)

From East Bridgford Village Hall Management Committee

Mr J Fox
Mr G Youngs

From East Bridgford Horticultural Society

Mr MW Clarke (also Drama Group and Care Group)

From East Bridgford Community Plan Group

Mrs P Andrews (also Friends of Springdale Wood and East Bridgford Wildlife and Bio-Diversity Group)
Mr R Mackie (also Friends of Springdale Wood and East Bridgford Wildlife and Bio-Diversity Group)

From East Bridgford Sports Club and Bowls

G Whitt

From East Bridgford Bridge Club

Mr J Warren

From East Bridgford WI

Mrs M Soar
Mrs J Lawrence (also Care Group)

From East Bridgford Parish Magazine
Mr C Henwood

From 1st Shelford and East Bridgford Scout Group
FG Meylan

Other village residents

Mrs C Clarke
Mrs J Finch
Mrs A Moore
Mr A Beresford
Mrs B Youngs
Mr S Baker

Apologies

Cllr RJ Hunt (Allotments and Open Spaces Committee)
Cllr PW Bancroft (also Neighbourhood Watch and Recreation and Amenities Committee, Executive Committee, Playing Fields and Pavilion Committee)
Cllr Mrs T Norman (Allotments and Open Spaces Committee, also Village Hall Management Committee)
Mrs J Barlow - Clerk
Mrs Sue Baines (Village Hall)
Mr A Hopwood (Internal Auditor)
Mr G Soar (Drama Group)

Minutes of the meeting held on 21st April 2016

It was noted that the issues around parking, particularly around the Trent Lane junction have not yet been resolved, but the Parish Council is in discussions with the Highway Agency.

The issue about inadequate notice of planning applications resulted in these being printed in the Parish Magazine.

Resolved that the Minutes be approved as a true record.

Chairman's Report

See annexed

Report from our County Councillor, Cllr. Kay Cutts

Due the boundary changes, Cllr Cutts will no longer be our County Councillor as of the May elections. Cllr Cutts highlighted some of the issues that she has been involved with during her time with East Bridgford and noted some concerns for the future:

Traffic /speeding – Speed limits have been moved further out of the village and Speedwatch set up

Pleased to see that Butt Field is being passed on from NCC to the village

Play Equipment – supports the Parish Council in seeking to recoup some costs for poor quality work

Medilink bus – is no longer free, Cllr Cutts is taking this up as an issue

Shelford Gravel Extraction Site – representations still ongoing to minimise disruption – potential second set of traffic lights on A6097

Langar tip closure – Rushcliffe now poorly served by recycling sites

Planning applications – are discussed at length by Councillors and observations and objections made to Rushcliffe Borough Council

The rebuild of the pavilion within a year of the fire was very impressive and Cllr Cutts was delighted to attend the reopening. Cllr Cutts commented on what a wonderful place East Bridgford is and how much she has enjoyed supporting the village. She expressed her gratitude to the Parish Council for their dedication and hard work and paid tribute to the contribution of her colleague, Cllr Lawrence.

Report from our Ward Member, Cllr. Nigel Lawrence

Cllr Lawrence reported on the last twelve months. The Borough Council has faced serious financial challenges again this year, and has had to increase its portion of Council tax by 4%, due mainly to increased pension obligations. There is a need to identify new sites for housing. Space has been allocated for 11,500 homes in Rushcliffe, although many sites are not moving forward due to obligations around transport, schooling, infrastructure etc. RBC's Strategic Planning Department was tasked with identifying more potential sites for housing, and has been investigating greenbelt sites in 6 villages, East Bridgford being one. Consultations have taken place – a postal consultation as well as consultation events, and results and recommendations are awaited.

Report from the Community Plan Group. Mrs P Andrews, Chair and Mr R Mackie

Mrs Andrews gave an update. Since last year's meeting, the Community Plan questionnaire has been distributed and gathered back. Responses were painstakingly entered into specialist software and the resulting data is now available on the village website. The next stage is for small task groups to look at seven main topics to pull out the key issues and identify main priorities. Volunteers are needed for these task groups – anyone with an interest in the village who can help move things forward. It is hoped that these task groups' work will be collated into a Community Plan by the end of the year. Mrs Andrews' details are on the village website and in the village magazine. Mr Mackie highlighted the important contribution made by the Community Plan to the recent consultation on potential sites for housing. The Group were able to present data to the Borough Council that was truly representative of the views of the village residents.

Matters of village interest or concern raised by the public

1. Cllr Atkins informed the meeting that the village had been entered into CPRE's Best Kept Village competition – the first round of inspections takes place in June.
2. Mr Henwood enquired about the Parish Council initiating an annual village clean-up, with the involvement of village groups, e.g. Scouts, W.I., and suggested that this be arranged before the Best Kept Village competition inspection. **Action: Cllr Clarke agreed to take this forward.**

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed Dated

(Chairman of East Bridgford Parish Council)

East Bridgford Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting – 20th April 2017
Chairman's Report

Butt Close and the Pavilion

The rebuilding of the pavilion after the devastating fire was completed on schedule and formally handed-over on the 13th May 2016. A ceremony to recognise this was held later when it was formally re-opened by County Councillor Kay Cutts (see below). The whole process required a significant amount of hard work and consultation by all concerned to ensure that the pavilion was brought back into use as soon as possible, and it was another example of the depth of expertise and experience available in our community and the willingness of people to go the extra mile when needed. Some snagging issues have arisen over the last 9 months or so but these have been resolved.

Since then, a significant amount of work has been done negotiating new lease arrangements with the Sports Club for the pavilion, bowls green, tennis courts and Butt Close itself. As part of this, a public meeting was held to discuss use of the pavilion. Part of the way through this process, however, it became known that Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) was prepared to transfer ownership of Butt Close to the Parish Council (PC), subject to a number of conditions mainly relating to protecting its use as playing fields, especially for St. Peter's Academy. At the time of writing, formal consent is awaited from the Government's Department For Education for this to go ahead. The whole process has required input from the PC's solicitors with consequential costs (see also the item about precept below).

Capital projects

Two planned projects, Improved Access to Cuttle Hill and the Trim Trail on Butt Close were set aside in 2015-16 because of the financial uncertainties arising from the pavilion fire. The former had attracted time-limited grant aid which was forfeited, but, although the scheme was on the reserve list for grant funding in 2016-17, this has not been forthcoming. The Trim Trail however did secure funding and the equipment was installed near the zip wire and skateboard ramp following widespread consultation about the types of machine and where they should be sited. The Council is grateful to Cllr. Atkins for seeing this project through to its fruition.

Traffic and Parking issues

Concern has arisen about the number of vehicles passing through the village, and their speed. Representations have been made to the NCC Highways Department, and the results of Highways Agency surveys of traffic patterns consequent upon the opening of the new A46, which have taken place in March of this year, are awaited to determine the extent of the problems. In the meantime, some Councillors have been trained to use the new speed-monitoring equipment which can be loaned from the police.

Parking is still an issue around certain areas, especially near the Academy at the start and end of the school day. Consideration by NCC Highways of some restrictions to parking near to the crossroads of Trent Lane, Kirk Hill, Main Street and Kneeton Road has been requested because of the visibility problems, especially for vehicles emerging from Trent Lane, and dangers from vehicles needing to use the 'wrong' side of the road near the junction.

Dogs

Further problems with dog mess were reported last summer, especially on Butt Close. An article was placed in the magazine to explain why owners and dog-walkers need to ensure that this is cleared up, and what may happen if the problem persists. If reports of over-flowing dog bins are any indicator, this situation may be improving, and hopefully this improvement will continue. It will

help if all dog walkers are vigilant and encourage others to be the same, if restrictions are to be avoided.

Planning applications, including tree works

At the time of writing, the publication of a further Local Plan consultation by Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) has been launched, with a public information evening arranged by RBC at the Village Hall. The consultation for East Bridgford focuses on a number of sites in the green belt which may be considered for development in the future. The Council has submitted a formal response which was agreed at a special extra meeting of the Council and it is hoped that many residents will have too. Copies of the PC's response can be seen on the village website.

Over the year, there have been the usual number and variety of planning applications which the PC has needed to consider as a statutory consultee and the PC is fortunate to have the expertise and experience of architects amongst its ranks to call upon, as well as the support of the local RBC ward Councillor, Nigel Lawrence, who attends as many PC meetings as possible.

A new survey of trees on parish-owned or leased land has been commissioned to meet the Council's obligations under its Tree Policy. This will form the basis of a management plan for the trees in question.

Support to other organisations

Small grants were made to other organisations during the year, including the following:

St. Peter's Academy, for the DARE project.

The Parish Magazine, towards printing costs, which, together with the East Bridgford website, continues to provide an invaluable service to residents and visitors

A new Donations Policy is now in place, details of which are available on the website.

The PC also purchased some 'Road Ahead Closed' signs so that the Horticultural Society could arrange for roads to be closed for the parade to Butt Close prior to the annual Village Show. These have also been used by the Scouts so that parades to the war memorial for Remembrance events can take place again.

Precept

Unfortunately, after a number of years with either no increase or increases of less than 2%, it has become necessary to increase the precept for 2017-18 by a significant amount. One area where costs have risen dramatically is legal services. Over the past year, the PC has needed to secure an existing asset, prepare to extend its ownership of assets to include Butt Close, and formulate long-leases to the Sports Club. Another area of expenditure which is rising rapidly is the maintenance of the Play Area. Some of this expenditure is related to items which the PC believes should have lasted longer before needing repair or replacement and this is being taken up with the contractor. However, the use of the Play Area needs to be as safe as possible, so if closing certain pieces of equipment is to be avoided, the repairs need to be done.

Finally, the past two years have been particularly busy ones, for both Councillors and Officers, who nevertheless give freely of their time and goodwill to try and ensure that our village continues to be a place where people want to live. Not only have the major issues mentioned above needed dealing with, but all the small but nonetheless important issues (especially for nearby residents).

Examples include responding to consultation about gravel extraction at Shelford, monitoring waste spreading on farmland on Kneeton Road, installing & maintaining memorial seats, weekly monitoring of the Play Area, negotiating with the Medical Centre about parking during building works, reporting fly-tipping, liaising with RBC about a travellers' camp off Butt Lane, occasional cleaning & maintenance of information boards, the defibrillator and the telephone box, managing the allotments on Butt Lane and dealing with numerous concerns raised by residents. However, notwithstanding the enormous fund of goodwill, the

Council has a responsibility to ensure that its structure is such that it can meet its responsibilities to the community and its employees. Hence, the PC decided to appoint a Minuting Secretary to enhance the capacity of the team of Officers. The Council also recognises the valued contribution of the internal auditor, Alan Hopwood.

Council News

Following the resignation of Tanya Hartfield, an election to fill the vacancy was held and Michael Verner was duly elected. More recently, Suda Sharma has also tendered her resignation and a replacement will need to be co-opted. The Council has extended its thanks to both Tanya and Suda for their service.

Community Plan

The Community Plan group is working on a replacement for the existing Parish Plan from 2003, which itself was a successful and effective document, and the results of the latest village appraisal by questionnaire organised by the group have recently been published. The PC looks forward to the creation of the Community Plan following work done by the various task groups now being set up to progress it and in due course helping to implement any improvements which are identified.

Springdale Wood

Following protracted negotiations, the PC has secured Springdale Wood for the parish on a very long lease. This will mean that the Friends of Springdale Wood, who do so much to maintain the wood so that it can be enjoyed by everyone, can implement the management plan agreed with the PC to ensure that the this continues as the wood matures.

Fireworks Display

A very successful beacon-lighting and fireworks display was held for the Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations on Butt Close on the night of last year's Annual Meeting. Consequently, the St. Peter's school PTA, the Friends of St. Peter's Academy, asked for permission to hold a similar event in November, close to Bonfire Night. This was granted and the experience from the first display enabled advice to be given about risk-assessment etc. The event was so successful that the Friends intend to hold another fireworks display around Bonfire Night this year.

Garth Powell Memorial

The new information board sited in the Car Park as a memorial to Garth Powell, the long-standing Headmaster of St. Peter's and Chairman of the Parish Council, was formally unveiled by Alison Powell last summer. It displays a poster and contains some flyers about landmarks around the village for visitors and walkers produced by the History Group and the project was funded by Alison Powell.

County Councillor Kay Cutts

The Council has been fortunate over the years for the continued valuable support of both the Rushcliffe Borough Councillor, Nigel Lawrence, and the Nottinghamshire County Councillor, Kay Cutts. Kay has been the County Councillor for the Radcliffe-on-Trent ward, which has included East Bridgford, for many years. During that time, she has attended most of our Parish Council meetings, and has offered her help and guidance on many occasions. However, with effect from the elections to be held in May this year, boundary changes mean that East Bridgford will be in a new County Council ward, Bingham East. Hence, whatever happens in the election, Kay will no longer be our County Councillor, so we extend our most grateful thanks to her for her valued support and our very best wishes for the future.