

Minutes of the Dunston with Coppenhall Annual Parish Meeting

Held at Dunston Village Hall
At 7.30 pm on Tuesday 6th May 2008

Present:

Cllrs H Jones (Chairman), I Collard, J Bagnall, I O'Reilly, G Diggett
County Cllr V Downes.

Clerk: D Wright

1 member of the public was present

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr P G Lawrence (abroad) and Cllr J Richardson(work commitments),District Councillor G Spandler & I Ford (District Council meeting)
2. Chairman reported on the previous years activities of the Parish Council. She noted the Council had been involved with monitoring planning permissions and with the highways improvement in Coppenhall.. The Highways had given good support, reacting quickly to problems. Fly-tipping had been cleared quickly. The Council had been looking at how to improve its service to the community and as well as a Newsletter and supporting the Church Magazine, it had launched websites for Dunston and Coppenhall . The Chairman expressed her thanks to Cllr Downes for her effectiveness in getting things done by the County Council, including clearing the area under the motorway.
3. The Clerk circulated the audited accounts for 2007/8 and summarised the expenditure, explaining the use of the funds. The reserves have now increased as although the Parish Council elections were held in the year, all councillors were elected un-opposed and the election provision was not used. The Council had agreed to provide planters in the villages and was looking to use some of its funds for general improvements.
4. Councillor V Downes reported that County farms had been saved and about 60 farms would remain although some smaller farms would be consolidated. The changes would take place over a 20 year period. The Changing Care was progressing with all residents transferred by the end of July. An additional care home was to be created and be built as separate apartments. There was a problem with recreating the services that had been provided to day patients at the residential homes. The Council has been looking for venues, such as village halls to allow this provision. There was a new initiative to try to reduce bed-blocking by looking at people at risk, over 80s etc and creation of re-ablement units as a halfway house for retraining with extra care.. One ward, Littleton Ward” will be established at Cannock Hospital. The proposals for a Waste incinerator at Four Ashes would take waste from everywhere and generate a large amount of additional traffic. It was hoped that the Car Park at Penkridge Railway Station would be built next year.
5. Cllr Jones delivered a report from Hyde Lea & Coppenhall Village Hall. The rear door had been changed to a pushbar type and this had increased the capacity of the Hall. The hall had now purchased a Marquee and was arranging a week long village festival for the summer.
6. Dunston Village Hall. Bookings are reasonable and the hall is ticking over. The new oak floor completed last year is a concern.
7. St Leonard’s School. The school has sufficient children at the moment and the numbers are up for next term in September.. The new Headmaster has settled in well. There will be an OFSTED inspection on Wednesday.

8. Footpaths. Some of the footpaths are becoming blocked or poorly marked. The Ramblers Association will be asked to repeat their surveys and the Footpaths Officer will be asked to improve marking. The possibility of arranging a Parish Day to walk the footpaths or the Parish boundaries was discussed .
9. Village matters:
A resident of School Lane raised the problems he had had with the District Council's identification of his address in discussing a planning application by his neighbour. The Council do not necessarily use the correct village address, although they do know the location of all the properties. He commented on the lack of maintenance of the drains, which had been cleared but were now blocked again. The problem highlighted by the recent flooding was the brook running by his house and the 23 foot long wall on the bridge which prevented water returning to the brook. He asked if some holes could be cut in the wall to allow water to flow away. It was noted that School Lane is scheduled for major maintenance in Summer 2009 and the Highways Department will be asked to consider this flood prevention measure now.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm and was followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting

Note: The Parish Meeting is not a meeting of the Parish Council. The minutes are not reviewed by the Parish Council but are presented at the next annual meeting