

Minutes of the Dunston with Coppenhall Annual Parish Meeting

Held at Dunston Village Hall
At 7.00 pm on Tuesday 9th May 2006

Present:

Cllrs P G Lawrence (Chairman), H Jones, I Collard, J Bagnall, D Starrs, J Richardson
County Cllr V Downes.

Clerk: D Wright

7 Parishioners were present

1. Apologies for absence were received from D Cllr G Spandler (District Council Meeting), Cllr I Ford (abroad), Mr & Mrs Boxall (unwell)
2. Chairman reported on the previous years activities of the Parish Council. The Council had organised public meetings on a number of contentious planning applications including a Gospel Church in Dunston and the demolition and housing development at Coppenhall House. The expense of a by-election for a Councillor had not been included in the annual budget, thus reducing the Council's funds. The Council had agreed to increase the forthcoming precept to restore the funds and help fund more activity.
3. The Clerk circulated the audited accounts for 2004/5 and summarised the expenditure, explaining the use of the funds. The Council's fixed assets at £400 are two notice-boards, although the notice-board at Dunston is now damaged and has been removed.
4. CCllr Veronica Downes gave a brief summary of her experience in her first year on the County Council. She had tried to attend the meetings of all the parish councils but was now finding it difficult to fit in all the meetings involved. The County Council had overspent its budget, particularly on provision for vulnerable children and adults. Recruitment was being held and a service review undertaken. She had joined a number of working groups and the scrutiny group for Children and Lifelong learning. A Working group is looking at increasing school lunches and reducing the current policy for vulnerable children. They are trying to increase the number of foster parents, because care homes are very expensive and they are looking at preventative measures such as respite to prevent children being taken into care. Cllr Downes was asked if she might have funds that could be allocated towards replacement of the notice-board and about progress on white lines in Dunston to control traffic. She said that she might be able to provide some funds but they might need to be matched by the Parish Council. She had spoken to D Wright at SCC Highways about the lines. A vote of thanks from the Parish Council to Cllr Downes was passed and she was congratulated on her achievements.
5. Cllr Jones delivered a report from HydeLea & Coppenhall Village Hall. In 2004/5 funds of £69,206 funding was achieved and a further £11,260 was obtained in 2005/6. Central Networks are moving the electricity pole in front of the Hall for free next year. During 2005/6 an extension has been provided to house inside toilets, and new radiators and a boiler. There is still work to be completed including a new entrance and ramp for disabled access. Tables and chairs are being delivered this week. And a grant has been applied from Lloyds TSB for further chairs and storage trolleys. Classes/Groups now available include a Paint Group, Yoga, Bridge and Womens' Institute. The Official Opening of the Village hall will be on Saturday 19th August with Summer Fete and live entertainment.
6. Cllr Richardson reported on Dunston Village Hall. Bookings are up on last year and there are plans to extend the Hall. However car-parking remains a major problem. Need the County Council to do something with the school car park. Cllr Downes was asked to look at this problem.
7. A report was submitted from St Leonard's School. The school has 63 pupils which will fall next year but the numbers will rise again at the end of 2007. The budget for

2006 has enabled the School to retain all its staff and services, together with the extracurricular activities it provides for the benefits of the children. A small wind turbine is planned for the school to produce electricity.

8. Discussion: M6 widening. The Highways authority has been asked to produce two schemes ; to widen the M6 or an alternative M6 expressway. These will be looked at by Transport Minister Stephen Lacey to decide which scheme to be used and then put out for public consultation. It was considered that there was not enough information in the previous plans for proper consultation. Any scheme will start 2010 and finish 2017.
9. Coppenhall Road improvements: The need for kerbs to make drainage work was discussed. There was a general wish to maintain the country village appearance of Coppenhall.. Cobbles and kerbing only around the drains would be preferred. The general feeling was not to widen the road but keep it narrow to restrict traffic speeds. The County Council was willing to look at purchasing land to widen the road for safety improvement
10. Future of parish council. The level of the current precept was discussed. Although not representative, the meeting felt the present parish rate was not high and could easily be doubled without complaint if the Council was able to do more.

All reports are in a shortened form, full reports can be obtained from the Parish Clerk

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

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