

## **Minutes of the Dunston with Coppenhall Annual Parish Meeting**

Held at Hyde Lea & Coppenhall Village Hall

At 7.00 pm on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2009

Present:

Cllrs G Diggett (Chairman), , I Collard, J Bagnall, , H Jones

District Cllr G Spandler.

Clerk: D Wright

No members of the public were present.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr I O'Reilly( work commitments) and C Councillor V Downes
2. Chairman reported on the previous years activities of the Parish Council. She reported that Peter Lawrence, a past Chairman and Councillor for 30 years had recently died whilst on holiday. She thanked Veronica Downes for her regular attendance at the meetings and her active support which was effective in solving a number of problems in the Parish. The District Councillors had not been able to attend since the meeting dates were changed to a Tuesday and the Council has now rearranged its dates to help them attend.  
The year has been quiet and unfortunately the Planning Department has generally disregarded representations from the Parish Council, noting development at Beech Lane and Food Kiosks on the A449. Promised resurfacing of School lane has still not occurred although in this year's programme.  
The Council has tried to be more active and initiate improvements but the planned planters were not implemented because of highway problems. Donations have been made to Hyde lea Village hall for Bunting and to both Halls for the provision of Christmas Trees and outside lights.  
Unfortunately the Council has not been able to fill the casual vacancy created by the resignation of Peter Lawrence in Dunston and the Council has given long consideration to its aims and effectiveness.
3. A vote of thanks to the Chairman for her work was proposed and agreed.
4. The Clerk circulated the audited accounts for 2008/9 and summarised the expenditure, explaining the use of the funds. The reserves have increased as there has been no by-election expenditure.
5. Councillor G Spandler gave a report on recent activity at the District Council. A recent survey of residents has shown that the two items considered the most important were keeping down expenditure and protecting the green belt. The District Council is now planning for its 5 year budget which will use up all the reserves during the 5 years. Council staff absenteeism has improved and is now on average only 6 days/year. Central government has been making the District Council responsible for extra services but has not been funding them so that the District Council needs to use its own revenues. The benefit system needs further improvement but Recycling is now at 40% . The number of planning applications has fallen by 35% this year. This district will have the highest percentage of 85 year olds in the country in the next 20 years.
6. Cllr Jones delivered a report from Hyde Lea & Coppenhall Village Hall. The festival week and Fete had been successful and made £2000 profit. Planning permission had finally been obtained for the container for storage and this had now been moved into position. The hall is going for Hallmark status to record best practise. A further festival is planned to start on 27<sup>th</sup> June this year.
7. Dunston Village Hall. Bookings are reasonable and the hall is ticking over. The new oak floor completed last year has had to be replaced at a cost of £7000. Veronica was thanked for providing £1000 towards this cost.

8. St Leonard's School. The school has sufficient children at the moment but become undersubscribed. The PTA has helped to provide funds for an IT suite at the school
9. Discussions.  
A questionnaire will be prepared and circulated to obtain residents suggestions on what the Parish needs. At the next meeting, the SPCA Director and the Training Manager will be invited to talk about structures for Councils and the powers and duties available to a Parish Council to create improvements for the residents of the Parish.

The meeting closed at 7.32 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***