

REMPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** of **REMPSTONE** held in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm on Monday 10th March 2008

Present: Mr D M Walker (in the Chair) Mrs J Taylor
Mr J Santoro Mr P Atkin
Mrs L Craven

In attendance: Mrs J M Walker (Clerk to the Parish Council)
Also present were 5 members of the Public and County Councillor Mrs L Sykes

Apologies for absence were recorded from Borough Councillor Mr R Adair and Councillor Mr R Beeby

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting explaining that this was the meeting when anyone could join in and comment on agenda items as they unfolded.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26 March 2007 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record. They were proposed by Cllr Mrs L Craven and seconded by Cllr P Atkin.

2. Matters Arising

(a) Clearance of Gnomes

The area around the Village Sign has now been cleared and the gnomes have found alternative accommodation.

(b) Village Sign

The back of the Sign is to be painted following the contract for the commemorative stone. Sufficient monies remain to instruct this work to be done.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Administration

The Chairman was pleased to report that for the past year, with the exception of one meeting, we had run on a full Council. It was a loss to us that Mr N Humphries had had to step down but it was hoped that at the Annual Parish Council meeting to be held in May we would be able to return to full strength. We have had eight Parish Council meetings and meetings with Nottinghamshire County Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council and Charnwood/Leicestershire County Council. Planning issues still tend to dominate.

Traffic Issues

We are still receiving support from the Police on speeding traffic through the village for the A60 and A6006. As recently as yesterday a major police crackdown on the A6006 was in operation that seemed to be targeting bikers.

Highways Issues

For some time this Council has been concerned that budgets and resources diminish in proportion to the distance away from West Bridgford. In November an afternoon forum was arranged with representatives of NCC Highways South in the Village Hall and proved to be a very positive meeting attended by fifty parishioners. Some of our requests have been put forward for budget consideration but it is not yet known how successful we have been. On the positive side a traffic calming scheme together with an interactive sign has been approved for the Wymeswold Road and we await installation dates.

Public Transport

We continue to enjoy the 99 bus service to Loughborough and Nottingham and it is noted that more people from the village are using it, particularly those with free bus passes. However, the Soar Valley service to East Leake on Tuesdays is poorly supported and is surely unsustainable.

Allotments

These continue to be fully utilised with a waiting list.

Village Sign

The original contractor for the commemorative stone was unable to give us a serious commitment. We now have another stone mason under contract for this work which is in hand.

Rabbit Infestation

During the year residents of School Lane complained of rabbit infestation. We brought in specialist pest controllers who identified that many of the problems were focussed on the overgrown Anabaptist graveyard. With agreement and financial support from the East Midlands Baptist Association the site was cleared of both undergrowth and rabbits. Recent correspondence with the EMBA opens discussion with regard to the future of this site and is to be an agenda item for our next business meeting.

Finance

As this is covered in detail as a separate agenda item this brief overview is to state that our finances remain strong. Although it has been necessary to modernise some of our accounts regarding the Village Hall, the Clerk's salary and the allotments this has been achieved at no increase in the precept.

Acknowledgements

The Chairman thanked County Cllr Mrs L Sykes for her support and Borough Cllr Mr R Adair particularly for his help over the quarry. He thanked Ms A Craig for her expertise in handling the Big Lottery Bid, Mr R Ross for managing the website and Mr R Wadkin for looking after the village bus shelter. He thanked all the Councillors for their support over the past year and particularly Cllr R Beeby for standing in during his absence and finally the Clerk, Mrs J Walker.

4. Report for 2007/8 from County Councillor Mrs L Sykes

Mrs Sykes raised several items and said that although they did not directly affect Rempstone it was good to know what was going on around us as these issues could have an indirect and possibly substantial impact in the future.

(a) A453

There has been some slippage in timescales since public consultation last summer and because of the need for additional traffic assessment work the programme is delayed until summer 2008. After publication of this there will be another public exhibition followed by a period of some thirteen weeks for formal comments and ultimately a public enquiry. The start if all goes well will be in 2010.

(b) NET

The NET Phase 2 Public Enquiry closed in January and the Inspector has now concluded site visits of the routes. He is expected to present his findings to the Secretary of State for Transport in July. A final decision will be announced by the end of the year and if successful construction could start in 2010 with trams running by 2013.

(c) EMRP

The main update is that the Government will now consider the panel's report before proposing changes to the Draft Plan for formal consideration early this year. The final plan will be adopted by the Secretary of State in the autumn. Two areas identified in the Greater Nottingham Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment are land south of Clifton and land west of Pasture Lane, Ruddington. The tender for assessing the viability of these two areas was awarded to Llewelyn Davies Yeang on 9th January 2008. If this goes ahead it will effectively join Clifton and Ruddington and it is one hundred per cent green belt land.

(d) Parkway Station

The construction of this new station started in December 2007 and should be completed December 2008. It is costing £25m primarily funded by Network Rail. They are promising a world class station with four platforms and many other facilities.

(e) Eco Town at Kingston

A successful local protest by 1000 people was held with 634 signing a petition. There will be a decision soon on which of the sixty locations will be chosen. The arguments are fraught with "red herrings" in order to arrive at their conclusions and the fight goes on. It is suggested that the number of houses would come off the housing allocation in areas already under discussion for development.

5. Report for 2007/8 from Borough Councillor Mr R Adair

Unusually word had not been received from Mr Adair.

6. Report from the Village Hall Management Committee

In the absence of Mrs J Schober (Chair) who sent her apologies Mrs B Mee tabled a report prepared by Mrs Schober and read it to the meeting. The Village Hall Management Committee has seen a range of developments and improvements during the past financial year and wished to thank the Parish Council for their positive and financial support and County Cllr Mrs L Sykes for supporting and processing a grant of over £500 for equipment for the Hall.

This year the maintenance of the Hall has not required money being spent on the fabric of the building though in recent weeks a serious leak has occurred around the porch area that is to be repaired. The Committee had held a range of events this year and, without exception, all had been extremely well received and were sell outs. Mrs Mee explained that in the forthcoming year there would be a May Dance and a stall at the Rempstone Rally together with the usual Bingo and Quiz nights. The Hall continues to be used by a range of groups and for private hire.

New equipment has been purchased and additional items have been obtained by grant aid through the Electoral Divisions Initiative managed by County Cllr Mrs L Sykes. It was also hoped to obtain a hearing loop system with the help of Cllr Mrs Sykes for which quotations were being sought. Although the Committee has recently lost Mr N Humphries the current membership stands at a total of five and it had been agreed, not before time, to pay £7.50 per hour as a cleaning rate to Committee members undertaking this function in the forthcoming financial year.

Mrs Mee then referred to a tabled Income and Expenditure Account that showed a healthy balance of £5,333.53 and also to the Refurbishment Account that showed a closing balance of £2,096.68 and explained that it had not been necessary to debit this particular account during the last year.

7. Report from the Village Hall Lottery Bid Working Group

In the absence of Ms A Craig who is leading this the Chairman reiterated that we have a guaranteed Stage 1 success and now have £16,000 to take us to Stage 2. We have confirmation in writing to proceed with the Design Team that we already have on board and this enables Mr Shayne Rice to work on the design. Submission with detailed costs, detailed design and a full business case are to be submitted by 31 August. As it is an important part of the process that we press forward to achieve Charitable Status for the Village Hall in order to be able to reclaim the considerable VAT involved, the Chairman said he had a meeting arranged later this week with NCC Rural Community Action for a way forward. It was also very necessary to have a fall back plan for fund raising and Rural Community Action would provide considerable help in this area. He mentioned that Ms Craig would like to hold weekly team meetings from now on as there was a lot to do in a very short time. It was confirmed that members of the team had been over to Normanton to see the Village Hall there that had been achieved in a similar way and would be a good example to emulate.

8. Report from the Parochial Church Council

Mr A Wilson, Churchwarden, reported on the following and wished to record thanks to the Parish Council for their continued financial contribution towards the upkeep of the churchyard and also to Mr C Burton who kept the external hedging well trimmed annually.

- (a) The general state of the church fabric is very good and at present no further alterations, repairs or improvements are envisaged.
- (b) As a result of the recent Giving Campaign (5 year plan) the financial position is very satisfactory.
- (c) The main drain on the church finances is the churchyard grass mowing and the same contractor has been engaged for the forthcoming year. The new part of the churchyard will be mowed regularly together with the approach to the main door but the area from the east end of the church to the A60 will be cut only twice each season.

- (d) The complaints about bell ringing ceased but it seems likely that an attempt was made to remove the lightening conductor copper off the external wall. This has prompted the PCC to install a Smart Water Protective System and talks are presently on-going with the insurance company.
- (e) Recently the connection from the Electricity Board 3 Phase Supply was disconnected from the church due to storm damage on a Saturday. The Board was informed and promptly rewired the supply ready for the Sunday service.

9. Report from the Neighbourhood Watch and Policing Matters

Cllr J Santoro told the meeting that we had had a very successful year with probably the lowest crime figures ever and that we are classed as a low crime village. There has been a change of officers at East Leake as PC Nick Lowe has left and we now have PC Kelly Warwick as a replacement and she and her team are enthusiastic delivering good information. There have been some incidents outside the village such as drug taking but prime problems are still focussed at East Leake where they have ASBOs and other more serious issues. There have been small amounts of vandalism in the area with some commercial units being broken into. With regard to traffic issues everyone welcomes the road calming measures that should reduce speeding and enable the Police to pursue this less diligently. Mr Santoro finished by thanking his Neighbourhood Watch team and confirmed that more residents are informing them when they are to be away leaving an empty house.

10. Accounts for 2007/2008 and the Budget and Precept for 2008/2009

The Clerk tabled the accounts to 10th March and said that the only change at 31st March would be the charges and interest to the two accounts. She would therefore be presenting the accounts to Audit as seen and approved. She explained that this year the grant for the Village Hall Refurbishment Account had been removed as they now had a second source of income from the Big Lottery Bid and that this had enabled more monies to be allocated to the Village Hall Account, Churchyard Maintenance and for the Clerk's remuneration. This had been possible with no increase in the Precept amount for the forthcoming year.

11. Open Discussion Time – none.

12. A.O.B.

- (i) It was pointed out that Mr N Mundy of Wysall Lane had a problem with the height of his neighbour's fir trees that were causing a nuisance. The Chairman believed they could be trimmed to 2 metres but that this was a neighbourhood issue and the Parish Council would not get involved. He said he would go and see Mr Mundy personally.
- (ii) When asked about the capping of the old wall the Chairman reported that this issue had been raised with the Environment Department. Similarly the maintenance of the plants has been lacking in the past year but NCC have been to look at the area. The Chairman said he would contact Mr S Favill for clarity and to renew contact to establish which Department was responsible for what areas in the future as there had been changes.
- (iii) Concern was again expressed about dog mess particularly up the Wysall Lane. Despite drawing attention to this problem on the agendas this had not improved. The Clerk would contact the Dog Warden for a way forward.
- (iv) It was felt that there was a lot of rubbish collecting everywhere along the verges and although this could be attributed to the weather the Chairman said that perhaps we should contact Streetwise to ask them to be aware of this.

14. Date of Next Meeting:

Annual Parish Council Meeting: Monday 12th May 2008

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and for their contribution to the proceedings and the meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Chairman _____

Date _____

