

Minutes of Scopwick and Kirkby Green Annual Parish Meeting held on 4th May 2021. The meeting was held online via Zoom due to Covid restrictions

Parish Councillors Present: Cllr Baumber (Chair), Cllr Banks, Cllr Brackenbury, Cllr Davies (joined meeting at agenda item 5), Cllr Flett, Cllr Nelson

In attendance: Jules Wilkins (Parish Clerk), one parishioner was also in attendance

1. Chairman's Welcome

Cllr Baumber opened the meeting by welcoming and thanking everyone for attending the Annual Parish Meeting. Apologies had been received from Cllr John Money and Peter Reeds (Chair of Neighbourhood Planning Group).

2. Previous Minutes

The Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on the 14th May 2019 were approved by Cllr Baumber as a true record. Cllr Baumber clarified that there was no Annual Parish Meeting in 2020 due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

3. Chairman's Report 2021

Cllr Baumber gave a report on the activities of the Parish Council since the last Parish Meeting:

Despite the difficult year and impact of lockdowns the parish council has achieved many things over the last year.

There has been an excellent upgrade to the play park equipment and the parish council has received a lot of positive comments about it. Thanks are due to FCC Communities and Lincolnshire Co-op for the grants to enable this. Thanks also to Creative Play and Tony Walker for the work to develop the site and to the Playing Field Committee for their work in preparing the project.

We have also had a success in terms of road safety with the B1188 speed limit through the village due to be reduced to 30mph soon. The parish council has been campaigning for some years and are glad to see this implemented at last.

A lot of work has been done to look after the natural environment of the village including tree works commissioned following the tree survey by NKDC in 2019. These tree works are necessary for safety and tree health but also to protect our attractive village environment.

Cllrs Nelson and Davies and volunteers have recently planted new trees around the beck and we have received many positive comments on this. We want to keep the village looking cared for and in keeping with its conservation status.

We have commissioned work on the damaged verge on Brookside outside the village hall. This work will be completed this year and there has been significant input on the design and materials by parish councillors to ensure it fits in with the environment.

We have also had an input with the refurbishment work due to be carried out on the wooden footbridges over the beck in Scopwick and are pleased that our views to ensure that any changes are in line with the village environment have been taken on board in the design and materials decisions.

This year the parish council has taken on responsibility for the upkeep of Kirkby Green churchyard. Thanks to Steve Lodge for his work in keeping the churchyard tidy over the last 2 years.

The parish council and its committees have continued to operate throughout the pandemic, although we have been unable to meet in person for over a year. We are looking forward to being able to meet up again in person soon. Thanks to Cllr Flett for all her hard work in keeping the village informed of what's going on and keeping various projects 'on track'. We are sure the community appreciate her support, which was helped by Cllr Kendrick making funds available to provide additional support and volunteers from the Village Hall Committee.

The Neighbourhood Plan has continued to develop this year and Cllr Davies will provide an update on this later.

There have been concerns about the over pumping into the beck by Anglian Water recently. The parish council is represented on the LCC task and finish group regarding the issues in Scopwick and we have ensured that a focus is kept on this issue. We received an update from Matt Ford at Anglian Water today that innovation funding has been granted for system improvements in Lincolnshire and it is expected that this will include Scopwick. He also reported that there was a recent issue on Main Street which was not related to this (it was a blocked pipe) but may have been noticed by residents.

Finally, thank you to those not already mentioned in this report. The parish council is working well as a team and the community is noticing what we have achieved this year.

Cllr Nelson provided an update from the Playing Field Committee. He informed the meeting that £50,000 was received in funding to provide the new play equipment and this would not have been possible without the fundraising work carried out by the Committee members to raise the £4000 needed to access the fund. Thanks also to Jill Moran and Jules Wilkins for keeping the work on track and to Tony Walker for his help in clearing the site, laying the turf and watering it to help it survive through the recent dry patch! We are now considering further improvements including outside exercise equipment and improvements to the football pitch.

There will be a grand opening and sports day on the playing field on 26th June 2021 where everyone is welcome to take part or just come along and watch. Cllr Baumber stated he was sure everyone would be keen to attend.

Cllr Flett provided a report on the Village Hall Committee. The Hall had numerous regular bookings and events booked for 2020 which all had to be cancelled. The Committee relies on this income and other fundraising activities to maintain the hall. Fortunately, Cllr Flett has been able to apply for several grants to avoid what could have been a £5000 deficit this year and confirmed that £21,000 has been raised in the last year. This now allows the village hall to be offered at discounted rates to encourage return of events once Covid restricts allow. The Committee has carried out a Covid health and safety risk assessment and have put in place all the measures necessary to make the space safe to re-open from 17th May.

Whilst the hall hasn't been open, the Committee has continued its community support in different ways including arranging various businesses to visit the village (pizza, butcher, fruit & veg van) and keeping in touch with vulnerable people in our parish by telephone calls and doorstep visits.

The Committee successfully bid for £900 in grants which was used to provide Christmas comfort boxes and Easter hampers for 24 homes in the parish. We also kept some events which were possible despite the restrictions such as VE celebrations and the Scarecrow festival. Members of the Committee also joined the Scopwick Emergency Support Group and continue to provide a service for shopping, collecting medication etc which is open to anyone who needs it.

Cllr Baumber asked for thanks from the parish council to be passed to the Committee and volunteers involved in the good work done.

Cllr Brackenbury reported that although no Community Speedwatch activity has been possible over the last year, he has continued to place the Speed Indication Device around the village, rotating it around the locations every 2-3 months. He has also undertaken a traffic volume comparison between 2 months pre-Covid and a comparable 2-month period in 2021. There was a significant drop of approximately 10,000 vehicles or 20%.

4. The Neighbourhood Planning Group.

Cllr Owens passed on apologies from the Neighbourhood Planning Group Chair for being unable to attend the meeting and provided an update on his behalf.

The Neighbourhood Planning Group has made good progress this year with two independent papers on sites for development and design codes being commissioned and completed. The parish council and residents have been consulted on the sites identified for development and this has enabled the production of the draft Neighbourhood Plan. The Group anticipate the plan will go to referendum in September 2021.

The Group has in particular spent some time focusing on low-cost housing as this was identified as an issue in the area.

Cllr Baumber invited any further comments from parish councillors before the meeting moved to the next item. Cllr Flett asked that everyone note preparations are underway for the Village Show on 7th August.

5. Members of the public raised the following issues:

Neighbourhood Plan consultation - a parishioner stated he thought the parish council should reflect on the neighbourhood plan, in particular that the community had not been fully consulted and therefore was not fully included in the development of the plan as was the original expectation of government. He had a particular concern that details of some sites put forward for development were not included in the recent survey consultation in the parish.

Cllrs Davies and Nelson responded with details of the consultation carried out and the reason for some of the sites not being recommended for development based on the advice from the independent consultants. Cllr Baumber concluded that, as the parishioner had been a member of the Neighbourhood Planning Group he had sufficient opportunity to raise his concerns and influence the plan previously and that the parish had been consulted to the satisfaction of the parish council.

Minutes submitted by Parish Clerk Jules Wilkins
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