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Notes of the Annual Parish Meeting – 9 May 2016

This was an informal meeting, with no formal agenda or minutes taken. However the following notes may be of interest to parishioners:

The meeting was attended by Councillors, the Parish Clerk, and approximately eleven parishioners.

Following introductions, the Council Chairman, **Mrs Margaret Lumb**, invited the trustees of the village charities to present their annual reports. A summary of each report is highlighted below and a full copy is attached as an appendix to these notes.

Charities:

- **Feoffees.** Mrs Margaret Lumb read the report submitted by the Feoffees and advised the bus shelter was funded by the Feoffees although paid for by the parish council to claim the VAT back. *Post meeting note from Mr Richard Saltmarsh: apologies as I had the wrong date in my diary. While the bus shelter has been completed the Feoffees are waiting for the finishing touches including a bench to be completed. Grants were made to the school of £100 towards the cost of a mural for the bus shelter and £1000 to the cricket club for the nets project, supporting the junior section of the club. The accounts show a balance of £10219.83*
- **Bluntisham Community Fund.** Mrs Joan Gutteridge read the report and confirmed the trustees have agreed to close the BCF and divide the balance between the children's clubs within the village: Junior Cricket Club, Blasters Football Club, Scouts, Beavers & Cubs, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows each receiving £256.00. The accounts balance is £1024.00.
- **Saywell Church Causeway.** Mr Mike Bateman. The trustees of the charity are Revd Sheila Anthony, Mr Mike Bateman & Mrs Julie Seamark. All requests for support from this charity are to be put in writing, see report for full details. The charity accounts show a closing balance of £3340.29 at 16.1.16, having awarded a grant of £263 to Earith PC for litter bins.
- **Blanche Prentice – Mr Mike Bateman** confirmed the charity has had no activity for several years and the object of the charity isn't suitable to today's society. He is hopeful that both this and St Thomas's Charity will be able to be closed this year but the charity commissioner is slow at responding.
- **St Thomas' Charity – Mr Mike Bateman** confirmed the charity has had no activity for several years and the object of the charity isn't suitable to today's society. He is hopeful that both this and Blanche Prentice Charity will be able to be closed this year but the charity commissioner is slow at responding.
- **Bluntisham Saywells School Charity.** Mrs Sue Everest & Mrs Jane Godfrey provided accounts for the year to 31 Dec 14 which show a balance of £8127.57. During the year the trustees agreed grants to the following: Grant to Somersham Town Band for tuition at St Helen's School of £500, Grant to St Helen's School for support towards the Storytelling Chair of £100 & £250 to Brambles Playgroup for play equipment.

Chairman's report: Thanks to all who have contributed towards the huge amount of work carried out during the year. A copy of the full report is attached to these notes; here is a summary of the achievements within 2015-16:

- Precept not increased during 2015-16
- Secured funding from WREN for refurbishments to the playpark of £45,169.00
- Secured funding from TESCO for new Outdoor gym of £8,000
- Good work from Councillors and Parishioners to improve the dog mess within the village by using spray paint

- Successful litter pick
- Attendance at PC meetings has increased

District Council update: Mike Francis spoke on behalf of HDC and advised that the Elections had taken place and as Jason Ablewhite is now the new Police Commissioner a new leader of the council was elected. Cllr Robin Howe is the new leader of the council. His initial aims are to improve the efficiency within planning including timescales for dealing with correspondence and to improve the public interface including the Call Centre. Alongside continuing to make the council more efficient and how to save money without reducing services. During the year the Electoral commission asked the districts to review boundaries. An advisory group was formed to review this and the outcome for Bluntisham is Colne will now be part of the Electoral boundary and when the election in 2018 (all out) Bluntisham and Colne will be part of the same ward. HDC are keen to help parishes with cutting of grass and green spaces and are happy to provide service level agreements and quotes.

County Council update: Steve Criswell sent his apologies and advised he had nothing to report but if any queries please contact him.

Questions from the floor and actions agreed:

Mrs Joan Gutteridge asked Mr Mike Bateman if the rent is reviewed annually, Mr Mike Bateman advised it is reviewed periodically and they were happy with the current rents.

Mr Joe Parker asked if the path outside 17 High Street was going to be repaired. Mrs Margaret Lumb advised the highway officer has contacted the resident who knows it has to be repaired.

Sue Everest asked if the parish council would reconsider their decision to put signs up advising no drone flying or mini mopeds on the recreation ground. While she appreciates the parish council can't monitor it, her personal feeling is there must be a moral responsibility to put up signs advising these activities are not permitted. Mr Mike Francis answered with a personal opinion that Somersham playing field have a notice advising what you can and can't do on the field and he asked that the parish council discuss it at a further meeting in the future.

Mrs Joan Gutteridge asked about the mini moto which was seen on the field last week. Mrs Margaret Lumb advised the police have been made aware.

Mrs Ann Parker asked about the car parking at Presses Close and who would be paying for it. Mrs Philippa Hope advised that residents in the past had approached HDC to have this work done at their cost, but this was refused by HDC. It would be down to the residents to pay for any works.

Mrs Jane Godfrey asked for an update on the cyclepath. Mr Ross Hamilton is hopeful that it will be delivered this year. A metal bridge will be installed around White Bridge Corner and the path will be on the land side of the railway bridge.

Mr Mike Bateman personally thanked the parish council for their efforts in the last year. He advised that although Bluntisham is in a low crime area, the theft of lead from church roofs is ongoing. Bluntisham were a victim this year and they ask for anyone who sees anyone on the roof of any church to report it immediately.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Tracey Davidson
Parish Clerk