

# Annual Parish Meeting of Meeting of Dunham, Ragnall, Darlton and Fledborough Parishes

Annual Parish Meeting of **Dunham, Ragnall, Darlton & Fledborough** held on the **4<sup>th</sup> May 2021** virtually via Zoom, as per the regulations enacted under the Coronavirus Act 2020, the meeting commenced at 6:30pm

## Members Virtually Present

Via Remote Attendance

Cllr Madeline Barden  
Cllr Kathryn Watkinson  
Cllr Lucy Atkinson  
Cllr Emma Thorpe  
Cllr Adrian Stapleton

Also, Virtually Present

Ed Knox

Via Remote Attendance

0 Members of the Public

Chairman

Vice-Chair

Cllr Vera Ballinger

Cllr Rachel Bean

Cllr Carole Booth

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer



### 1/21 To receive apologies for absence

None.

### 2/21 To receive declarations of interest

None.

### 3/21 To Approve Minutes of the Previous Meeting

After discussion, the council **resolved** to accept the minutes. The chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record.

### 4/21 To Receive Chairman's Report on Parish Events

Cllr Barden presented a two-year report as follows: "Since we didn't have a meeting last year, I am going to cover the last two years in this year's report, but I will make it as succinct as I can!!

I am going to review the last two years as kind of 1) housekeeping/administration; 2) projects and the most important of all, 3) staffing.

#### Staffing

As you know, we changed clerk last year and delighted to say how pleased we have been with Ed as our new clerk. It was sad to see Caron leave, she had made considerable improvements to the council, most significantly achieving the Foundation Award Scheme. However, Ed has slipped seamlessly into the role as our Clerk and made a fantastic start by attracting over £5,000 of grants towards our play area improvements.

In our advertisement for the post, we asked for a clerk of experience and preferably with a CiLCA qualification. Ed had the experience and within a few months had achieved the qualification as well. The quickest time expected to achieve this was 6 months, Ed achieved it within half that time. We are delighted that Ed took us on!! Thank you for all your good work Ed - Long may it last.

We also have to thank Colin for his constant excellent work as our Lengthsman. Colin works across our four parishes and helps keep the area functional as well as looking tidy and smart. I would like to say that I saw that in operation when we had our rainy period, I could hear the drains running because Colin had ensured the drainage 'cuts' in the grass verges were taking the water off the road and into the drainage system. Despite a recent short stay in hospital, Colin has been back in harness, working diligently across our parishes. Many thanks Colin.

And we have to welcome our new Councillor, Emma who has recently joined the parish council, bringing fresh blood and enthusiasm to the role. We hope you'll be with us for several years to come.

Finally, I would like to thank all the councillors for their commitment to the parish council, I welcome all your contributions, without you we wouldn't have a council, so many thanks, it is appreciated.

### **Administration**

Naturally we have to mention COVID 19, it has impacted on our personal lives and as a parish council. It has been an achievement to keep the parish council running whilst we have learnt about social media platforms. I am thankful to both our clerks that we simply took it in our stride and rose to the challenge.

All councils have to abide by Local Government rules and our clerk keeps us on the straight and narrow to ensure we do just that. Our parish council has achieved the Foundation Award and at the time was one of 6 parish councils in Nottinghamshire to have made that achievement. I would like to think we can move on from that and go for the next level - over to you Ed to tell us what we need to do!!

As previously mentioned, our Play Areas have been maintained and in some cases improvements made. Our thanks to Ed and Simon Ashworth.

Through COVID we have still dealt with all our planning applications and that has included making our contribution to the Bassetlaw Local Plan. Our role is not yet complete, we continue to work with Bassetlaw on what is now termed the Master Plan for High Marnham Power Station. We also made our contribution to the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Waste Local Plan; the Minerals Plan; as mentioned, Bassetlaw Local Plan and pulled together all the parishes down the Trent enabling an area response to the proposed developments at High Marnham Power Station and responded to NCC's request for Unitary Authority status.

With significant support from our County Councillor, we have achieved improvements to the road through Ragnall and had Roberts Close resurfaced. We continue to lobby for the improvements needed to keep our Highways safe.

Our parish council attends the South East Bassetlaw Forum which enables me to raise some of our issues at another forum. And I also attend the Cottam Power Station meetings: I know that attending meetings can be seen to be onerous but, on this occasion, it was possible to alert the school to the offer of a refurbished Portakabin free of charge. The school were very appreciative of this gift.

We had a new bus stop installed near the village hall. I don't think it is used excessively but at least we have a means of catching the bus on the north side of the A57, avoiding crossing that very busy road.

The clerk has ensured that all necessary papers have been archived including the binding and archiving of our minutes

We have also identified and registered all parish council land (including the War Memorial) with the Land Registry Agency, something we should have done years ago but now finally sorted.

Financially our council is now operating as per Local Council Guidelines with at least one year's budget held in our bank account. And again, we have passed our Audits with no hitches, thanks to our clerk.

### **Projects**

As most of you are aware, we trialled surgeries at the village hall, at the same time as the post office hours but this proved not to be needed, clearly, we are doing our job well!!

We have conducted Litter Picks, a depressingly necessary an ongoing activity which has been mainly carried out by councillors, thank you.

We have achieved a market rent for Reptile Gardens, agreed by both parties. And our other land achievement has been to bring the Allotments back into use at Horne Lane. Our thanks to Simon Ashworth and I am pleased to say they are now rented out.

Supported by our County Councillor we have resolved the flooding issue at No 12 Roberts Close something that had been ongoing for years. I am well aware we have other flooding issues that we need toward on, but at least something has been put right

I would be inclined to reach for my trumpet now, if I had one, and announce that after several years of negotiation with the Environment Agency all three benches have been installed on the flood bank. Excellent!

And almost with the same fanfare, the Fledborough directional sign has been erected. I don't want to think how long that has taken to get agreed with Highways.

Finally in this section I would like to thank Vera for her work in pulling together a record of our recorded accidents over the last 10 years. As great as I think the parish council is, reading 10 years of minutes is an achievement. Many thanks.

#### Future

We have long campaigned for a reduced speed limit at Ragnall Crossroads (50 mph) and this should be achieved this year. It is currently out for consultation but is expected to be put in place in the very near future.

We are endeavouring to get Far Hill Lane opened to the public. This is a long-term project even though we secured 18 past and present residents' confirmation that they had walked this lane free of obstruction. It is process likely to take between 4 and 7 years to complete. Thanks to Steve Parkhouse at the Ramblers Association and Neil Lewis at NCC.

We are pursuing an improved quality of fibre broadband into our parishes which is proving to be difficult but the intention is to pursue this to a satisfactory end.

We are awaiting a report from the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust on the types of projects we can undertake to improve the natural environment for our wildlife.

And finally, we may return to the undertaking of a Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that future planning applications meet with not only District Council policy but our local policy.

You think it's been a quiet couple of years but on reflection, we have achieved quite a bit. My personal thanks to everyone who has helped us achieve these ends."

CLlr Watkinson added thanks and appreciation from all at the Council for all CLlr Barden does and continues to do as Chairman.

#### 5/21 10 Minute Parish Meeting Public Open Forum

None.

#### 6/21 Closure of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting at 6:55pm.