

Walton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the St. Johns Community Church Hall, Old Chester Road, Walton on Thursday the 4th April 2013

Present

Cllr. J. A. Ashcroft Chairman
Cllr. Y. R. Shaikh Vice Chairman
Cllr. V.C. Lacey
Cllr. J. R. Ward
Cllr. M. D. Eldridge
Cllr. H. A. S. Hardie
Cllr. R. Hewitt
Cllr. R. Hardie
Cllr. C. M. Chadwick
Cllr. R. D. Bennett

In Attendance

Borough Councillor Paul Kennedy
Ray Hallam – Parish Clerk
2 Residents

Cllr. J. A. Ashcroft, the Chairman opened the meeting at 7.20pm and welcomed Councillors and residents to the meeting.

The Chairman confirmed that at the Annual Parish meeting every parishioner present was able to raise any relevant matter for discussion. The Agenda and Minutes of the previous meeting were available for everyone.

- 1 Apologies** - The Chairman stated that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Meacock.
- 2 Minutes of the previous Annual Parish meeting** - The minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on the 5th April 2012, distributed to all present, were reviewed. It was moved that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting. This was proposed by Councillor J.A. Ashcroft and seconded by Councillor Eldridge. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.
- 3 Chairman's Report** - Councillor J. A. Ashcroft read from his prepared report, on his year in office as Chairman of the Parish Council.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2012/13

Annual Parish Meeting 4th April 2013
Chairman's Report

Walton Annual Parish Meeting 4th April 2013 Chairman's Report

For the first time in several years there was a change in the membership of the Parish Council. At the election on 3rd May 2012 Paul Morgan did not stand for re-election and Malcolm Eldridge was elected unopposed. In fact all councillors were elected unopposed. Paul had been a valued member of the Council for some 14 years and we thanked him for his past services. Malcolm has shown a lively

interest in the work of the Council for many years and we welcomed him and the contribution he is able to make, especially with his knowledge of the village and his keen interest in Walton Estate.

The celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee was a welcome relief in these days of austerity and poor weather - the Parish Council made donations towards the cost of two street parties and with Appleton and Stockton Heath put on a firework and beacon display. There will also be other permanent reminders of the Jubilee.

The Creamfields concert was something of a disaster because of the bad weather, both for the organisers and patrons - the event was stopped only part way through -and for the whole area. The torrential rain flooded the roads, paths and fields. This was made worse by the excess run off from the tented areas and the detritus left by the concert goers. Hopefully the awful weather will not be repeated and, the £500,000 being spent by the organisers will remedy matters.

Dr Harries of St John's led the service on Remembrance Day at our War Memorial and it is gratifying to see the number of parishioners, old and young, who attend. The Council expressed its gratitude to Mr. Hammersley and his staff at the Stag Inn for cleaning up round the area and painting the memorial, and also for the coffee laid on at the Stag after the ceremony.

As chairman of the Parish Council I would normally have taken part in the Annual Civic Service at St John's, but I had to withdraw. Councillor Shaikh Vice Chairman undertook this duty and we were able to carry on the tradition that has continued for several years now. It was a well attended and successful event.

Ongoing Items:

Traveller Sites - The Borough Council is working on finding official sites.

Walton Estate - The Borough Council seems to have turned this into a no-cost or profitable concern, thus removing the risk of it being changed to an unwelcome use.

Ship Canal - The Borough Council is still engaged on this with Peel Ports so that if additional use is made of the canal it is kept to tolerable limits.

Parish Council - I want to pay tribute to the work of the Parish Councillors that often goes unnoticed and unregarded. There is then regular attendance at our Council meetings, and sometimes with other organisations; dealing with problems raised by parishioners, dealing with planning applications, planting flower beds, organising Winter Resilience schemes, putting up Christmas trees in the village and at the Stag, composing and distributing the Parish newsletters, arranging and organising the street tree planting, etc. etc.

I also thank our parish clerk for his work throughout the year and his patience and professionalism at our meetings. Also our thanks are due to Borough Councillor Kennedy for attending our meetings and keeping us informed of the goings on at the Borough.

If I may conclude on a personal note: When I was asked to be the chairman last May I was very reluctant to take it on, I had already had 4 terms as chairman and I am getting on a bit. However I thought that instead of just complaining about the length of our meetings I ought to see if I could do something about it and so I accepted the chair. I think that we have shown over the last few months that meetings can be kept short if we all work at it. I would like to think that this will be continued and improved upon and that meetings soon will be down to an average time of 90 minutes and that shortly the Parish Council will be able to amend its Standing Orders so that no ordinary monthly meeting can last longer than 2 hours.

John A Ashcroft Chairman

4 April 2013

- 4 **Parish Matters** – Mr. Priestner said he wanted to apologise for misleading the Parish Council in connection with Acton Grange Wood. He thought the wood would reach Ancient Woodland status in approximately 60 years, but this is not the case. Apparently in England and Wales any wood must be established pre 1600 in order to qualify.

The Chairman thanked everybody for attending. The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

DRAFT