

Pursuant to notice a meeting of Ackworth Parish Assembly was held on Monday 16 April 2018 commencing at 6.30pm

Present: Councillor S Balfour, Chairman of the Council

Cllr N Bland, Cllr J Evans, Cllr M Galvin, Cllr A Garbutt, Cllr Mrs S Hollyhead, Cllr T Hollyhead, Cllr H Malkin, Cllr D Johnson, Cllr R Molloy and District Councillor Ms J Carrington

Apologies: Cllr Mrs P Garbutt

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2017

The minutes were noted.

2. Chairman's Report – The Chairman read out her report:

1. The work of the Parish Council

1.1. It is the aim of all councillors elected to Ackworth Parish Council to represent all the people of the village to the best of their ability. We value the stability of the community and we welcome new residents who bring new skills and new ideas to our village.

1.2. The Council manages the playing fields and buildings at Carr Bridge and Brackenhill; the Low Ackworth Playing Field; the cemetery; the allotments; the village green; and the Community Centre on Bell Lane. It organises community events throughout the year. The Parish Council also manages the budget and sets the Parish precept.

1.3. The clerk and the administrative assistant respond to concerns about the village raised by Parish Councillors. They also respond to concerns raised directly with them by individual residents. The Parish Council cannot and will not respond to negative comments, complaints and false information published on Social Media.

1.4. The work of the Council is mostly conducted through Committees and working groups which then report back to the full Parish Council meeting for approval.

1.5. The Parish Council works positively with community groups and organisations to promote positive action in the village. These include the Brackenhill Allotments Association, Low Ackworth Community Association, Ackworth Community Library, Ackworth Senior Citizens Fund, the South East Link Road Action Group. In addition the Council supports the Ackworth Big Spring Clean, the Ackworth Pram Race and CRY - the Rory Embling Foundation.

1.6. We work closely with the West Yorkshire Police through PCSO Lorraine Kavanagh. Lorraine has held open sessions for the Ackworth community and has helped residents on the Strata estate to set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. She is hoping that more will be set up in other areas of the village.

2. Developments in the village

2.1. With around £38,000 of funding from Wakefield Council the Low Ackworth play area has been completely refurbished, the boundary hedges have been trimmed and rubbish removed, and new fencing has been erected. At Carr Bridge playing field work has been done to improve the access path to the play area, and on the steps up to the tubular slide. A damaged willow tree has been removed and three new trees planted. The Parish Council has supported District Councillors to install planters on the roundabout and to achieve improved lighting, removal and replanting of some trees and new seating on Dando Way. A new kissing gate, funded by the Parish Council, will be installed by Wakefield Council at the top of the footpath going down from Green Lane to Hessele Beck.

3. Road Safety

3.1. Through the work of the Road Safety Working Group, in October Councillors and volunteers took part in a Community Speedwatch Scheme operated 'Smiley Sid' to monitor the speed of traffic at key points in the village. This will happen again in 2018.

3.2. Working closely with SELRAG and Wakefield District Councillors, the proposal for a by-pass road for Ackworth has now been moved on to a new stage that will assess the feasibility of the project alongside other road schemes in West Yorkshire.

4. Events in the village

4.1. The annual Ackworth Gala was very well attended and was a great success.

4.2. Over 320 children came to see Santa in his grotto at the Bell Lane Community centre. This annual event is much appreciated by Ackworth families and greatly enjoyed by the Councillors and staff who help with the preparations and management on the day. Thanks also to the volunteers who help with bag packing and trimming up the grotto. The Parish Council once again worked with Ackworth Churches together to plan the Christmas Lights switch on. This was very well attended. Villagers enjoyed a short carol service, counted down for the Gala queen to switch on the lights and then enjoyed tea and mince pies. Christmas trees have been planted on the grassed area by All Saints Church and at the entrance to Doncaster Road Estate to be lit up in future years.

4.3. Although it is not officially a Parish Council event, Councillors are centrally involved in raising funds for and organising the Senior Citizens' Christmas Tea. This took place as usual in the refectory at Ackworth School and this year those attending were treated to a traditional hot Christmas meal. This proved very popular and the committee hopes that it can be repeated next year.

4.4. 30 children took part last year in growing pumpkins. The planting day and showing day in association with Brackenhill allotments are now regular events.

4.5. The third Big Ackworth Litter Pick finally happened on March 25th having been cancelled twice because of snow. Thank you to Adam Fletcher for organising it and to Wakefield Council Streetscene for providing the litter picking sticks and bin bags and for organising the pick-up of the full bags of rubbish. The next litter pick is planned for 28/29 April prior to the Tour de Yorkshire.

4.6. The next big event for Ackworth will be the passage of the Tour de Yorkshire through the village. On the initiative of the Council Village Events committee the community is working together to make bunting and to decorate the village. Shanks have provided some bicycle frames to be painted yellow (these have to be given back afterwards for recycling). Resident Phil Hollinworth has designed and made wooden bikes which he has given to each school Ackworth School to be decorated and displayed along the route. The Parish Council provided the materials. A big screen will be erected on Carr Bridge playing field for everyone to enjoy. The aim of everyone involved is to make our village amongst the best decorated along the route and for the whole village to come together for a really enjoyable day.

5. Parish Council grants

5.1. During the past year the Parish Council has given grants to the Westfield Food Bank in South Elmsall, the B.O.A.R. Cottage Charity which provides holidays for disadvantaged young people, CRY -(Cardiac Risk in the Young) Rory Embling Foundation, the annual Ackworth Pram Race, the Senior Citizens Tea fund, 1st Ackworth Scouts.

6. New Councillors and staff changes

6.1. Following resignations two new councillors have been elected to the Parish Council. Mike Galvin was elected for High and Low Ackworth ward, and Nathan Bland was elected for Moor Top ward.

6.2. A new team leader, Dave Gillan, has been joined the Parish Council staff and the role of Kyla Batty has changed to include some supervisory work.

7. Developments for the next year

7.1. During the coming year the Parish Council will take on responsibility for the public open space on the Strata estate.

Finally I would like to thank Councillors and staff for their hard work and commitment during the past year. We will continue to work positively for the whole Ackworth Community in the coming year.

3. Ackworth United Charities Report

Mr John Rowley Treasurer of the Charity presented a draft report of the accounts to 31 December 2017. He explained some of the detail and answered questions.

He apologised that he was unable to attend last year's Parish Council meeting and would forward a copy of the independently examined accounts to 31 December 2016.

He said that on the 4 May when the Tour de Yorkshire is coming through the village the Almshouses Community room and an empty property would be open for local residents to visit and refreshments would be provided.

The Chairman thanked Mr Rowley for his attendance at the meeting.

4. Issues from members of the public

There were no questions from the attendees.

There being no further business to attend to the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 6:50 pm

Chairman 14 May 2018