

Minutes of the Annual Public Meeting of Great Ayton Parish Council

held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 25th March 2009 at 7.00 pm

Business

Chairman's welcome and report
Minutes of the 2008 Public Meeting
Matters arising from those minutes
Councillors' attendance
Any other business

Present

Councillors N Waters, Chairman, R Kirk, Mrs J Imeson, Mrs F Greenwell, J Fletcher and G Readman. Five electors also attended.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Conroy and Mr P Greenwell

Chairman's Welcome and Report

Councillor Waters welcomed the electors to the meeting. He thanked his fellow Councillors who had helped throughout the year.

The village fete had taken place in June. It had been a good day despite the disappointing turnout of floats. Those which had entered were of the usual high standard. Thanks were extended to all who had helped to make it a successful day. The Christmas events had been most enjoyable, the lights were fantastic, Peter Greenwell was commended for his excellent work, and the many helpers thanked for their input.

There had been one or two controversial issues during the year. The cutting back of the alder suckers on Low Green had raised some adverse comment but Councillor Waters had favoured their removal and considered that the Low Green looked better for it. The Parish Council was pushing for floodwater storage at the Riverside but had met with some resistance from the Environment Agency who felt that it could not be financially justified. The Council would continue its efforts on this matter, and on the flooding issues at Roseberry Crescent.

The village hall was in extremely poor condition and work had commenced on repairs. Work was to be carried out to the trees on High Green, which was the focal point of the village, to maintain their health and improve appearance. Community Service continued with their task to paint the railings around the village. The big success story of the year was the installation of the new roundabout at Tree Bridge junction for which the Parish Council had campaigned for many years.

The Cemetery Superintendent, Howard Atkinson, continued to do an excellent job in the cemetery and keeping the village greens in good order, and Paul Suggitt, the River Warden Contractor, maintained the river to a high standard.

The biggest challenge the village faced was the continuing antisocial behaviour of a small number of youths. Various agencies including the Parish Council, the Police and 4youth, were attempting to address the issues and a youth group had commenced regular activities in the village hall. It was recognised that it would be impossible to engage some of the worst offenders.

The Clerk had recently tendered her resignation and Councillor Waters thanked her for carrying out her duties so effectively over the twelve years of her tenure.

Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Public Meeting held on Wednesday 19th March 2008 were approved and signed.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising

Councillors' attendance

At the thirteen meetings since the last Annual Public Meeting Councillors' attendance was as follows:- Councillors N Waters, G Readman, D Conroy and Mrs F Greenwell – 12; J Fletcher and Mrs J Imeson – 11; R Kirk - 9

Any other business

Mr Pickering asked if there had been any progress on moving the play area to another location. Councillor Readman said that it had not been discussed. Eventually the land would be used to extend the cemetery but it had taken many years to get a play area at all and there were no immediate plans to move it. Recommendations made by the RoSPA report were being implemented and there were no health and safety issues. Mrs Pickering said that she and her neighbours were still experiencing problems with antisocial youths but the situation had improved and she thanked the Parish Council for lowering the play area hedge. The Council explained that a decision had been taken to leave the play area gate unlocked as it was impossible to keep the youngsters out and the open gate would stop them climbing over the hedge and damaging it.

Mr Pickering asked if Councillors would consider holding surgeries. Councillor Waters said that one was held each month – the Parish Council meeting which was open to all. All Councillors and the Clerk were also available at the end of a phone or by letter or email.

Mrs Pickering asked if there had been any progress on the cycle path. Councillor Fletcher said that a small section had been installed at Stokesley but the Great Ayton to Stokesley path was still on the drawing board. It would cost a great deal of money and the County Council was now in a very different financial position from that of 12 months or 3 years ago. The Parish Council would continue to exert pressure on the County Council as Stokesley was where the school and leisure facilities were.

Mr Harrison asked about the cost of the roundabout. Councillor Fletcher said that he believed it had cost the County Council about £500,000.

Councillor Kirk said that Hambleton District Council had a new dog warden and three fixed penalties of £50 for dog fouling had been issued. It was hoped that this was just the start and

publicity would have some effect.

Great Ayton Service Station had kindly agreed to replace the bench near the top mini roundabout.

Councillor Waters said that an Australian over 60s cricket team would be visiting Great Ayton in the summer and playing a game here. Three members of Great Ayton Cricket Club had played in an England over 60s team in Australia. It had been 75 years since Captain Cook's cottage had gone to Melbourne and the visiting cricketers would celebrate the anniversary by making a presentation to the village from the Lord Mayor of Melbourne.

Councillor Waters thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed.