

SOUTH WITHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 4th Apr 2017 at 7.00pm

Present 17-044 Cllr C Fowler (Chair), Cllr C Ashton, Cllr F Parish, Cllr A White, Cllr A Smith, Cllr C v Straubensee, Cllr K Hodgkin, Cllr M Kinning, Mrs H Sandon (parish clerk), Sharon Milner, (Executive Head), Anna O'Shaughnessy, (Headteacher), Keith Ambrose (Governor) from South Witham Academy, Jeff Purdy, Nikki Prime, (Friends of the School representatives) and 20 residents approx.

Apologies for Absence 17-045 Cllr S Lansdowne, Cllr J Oldfield, Cllr K Jolley

Chairman's Comments 17-046 Cllr Fowler reported on the Parish Council's past year's activities (report on file with the Parish Clerk) and to be put on the village website.

School Presentation 17-047 An overview was given by Sharon Milner of how South Witham Academy became part of the Brooke Hill Academy Trust as at 1st Sept 2016 after it was deemed a failing school. She explained the school's ethos and aims (handout given out to those present). Anna O'Shaughnessy then went on to explain how the children earn rewards/ privileges and how the children get the chance to meet up with the Brooke Hill and Edith Weston Academy schools for shared experiences and enrichment opportunities using specialist staff. Likewise, the staff meet up for shared training and staff meetings which benefits them greatly. Keith Ambrose briefly explained how the Academy has its school funding given over to manage/ utilise as they wish for the school, without the restrictions imposed by County Councils.

Friends of the School Presentation 17-048 Presentation given by Jeff Purdy and Nikki Prime detailing how the Charity registered group fundraises for additional treats and trips for the children, such as commemorative coins, the Yr 6 graduation and school discos. They also gives each class a small yearly budget for them to use for extra purchases not covered by school finances. They are always looking for additional helpers and new fundraising ideas, so people are most welcome to come and join them.

Community group presentation 17-049 Fran Parish (SWPC Cllr) explained how the group evolved from a coffee group set up in May 2013 by Sandra Lansdowne, Joan Redhead and herself. All residents are welcome to join them for coffee and a chat and drinks and cakes are only 50p each, with meetings taking place fortnightly on Weds mornings. The group has funded a lot of events over the years from the proceeds, such as the Children's Christmas parties (four to date), over 60's afternoon tea, a Country Music Night and a Hound Dogs night. The group also runs the village Christmas Lights Competition, carol sings each year and was involved in the War Memorial Fund to restore the Memorial. The group has in the last year taken on looking after two of the village troughs and planted over 2000 bulbs around the village with help from residents. They also applied and were successful in obtaining Grant funding to continue the Finding Fitness activities, free activity clubs for the children during school holidays and a free exercise class (held in South Witham Academy) on Tuesday mornings during term time for residents.

Questions from the floor 17-050

A Parish Councillor asked the school what was happening about the proposed changes to school holiday dates for South Witham Academy. Sharon Milner advised that the consultation has now ended and so the Governors will consider all the responses received after the Easter holidays and make a decision.

Also raised with the School was the parking outside the school by teachers and parents causing congestion, particularly at school peak times of day. The PC had put in a pathway to the rear of the school with LCC grant funding many years ago, so that cars may be parked at the VH, to ease congestion and children can walk to school safely. The School agreed to look at the parking issues after Easter also.

There being no other business the meeting finished at 7.20pm