

BEETHAM PARISH ASSEMBLY

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday 19th April 2021 remotely via Zoom.

Present were Parish Councillors Brian Meakin (in the chair), David Crayston, Brian Dean, Peter Greifenberg and Margaret Knowles. Also C Cllr Pete McSweeney and D Cllr Helen Chaffey, Parish Clerk John Scargill and four members of the public.

1. Opening of the Parish Assembly and welcome – Cllr Brian Meakin opened proceedings by welcoming those present and apologised for the Zoom access problems encountered by some, including those who had wished to attend but who had been unable to surmount those problems.

2. Apologies for absence – Parish Councillor Steve Yates.

3. The minutes of the Annual Assembly, held on 14th March 2019 (previously circulated), were taken as read and authorised for signing by Cllr Meakin.

4. Review of the Parish Council's years 2019/20 & 2020/21 (Cllr Brian Meakin) – Cllr Meakin apologised for there being no Annual Assembly in 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown. He gave a power-point presentation of notable Beetham Parish Council events over the two years 2019/20 and 2020/21.

In the East Ward, Beetham flooding, current leachate from the now defunct Slackhead refuse tip and the shortage of car parking space in the village and at the crematorium were matters in which the parish council continued to be closely involved. In the West Ward, welcome road resurfacing work and upgrades to Storth Community Shop had been carried out by the organisations responsible. Generally around the parish two defibrillators had been purchased and installed in defunct telephone kiosks adopted by the parish council, street furniture was continually checked and repaired/renewed as necessary. Signage was also closely monitored to ensure clear and well-maintained directions, particularly to tourist hotspots. Trees on the two plots of parish council land were now subject to planned maintenance. Traffic speeding was a serious issue overall, and particularly on the A6 as it passes through Beetham and on the B5282 between Sandside and Arnside; the parish council was actively engaged in trying to provide speed indicator devices (SIDs) at strategic locations in these areas. An important national development was a move towards the increased devolution of decision making in local government, of special interest being the idea of a new Bay Authority to include Beetham parish; a decision on this was expected within weeks.

Matters raised from the floor included:

- doubts raised that the Beetham flooding problem could be solved by deepening the channel of the River Bela, as favoured by some, and the submission that a more effective alternative could be to obtain the co-operation of landowners/users in Beetham and upstream for allowing the river there to overflow to a greater controlled degree when in spate.
- a request for a progress report on the proposed footpath through the sports field from Slackhead to Stanley Street. It was explained that a site meeting had been imminent when the pandemic struck, since when the consequent lockdown had precluded further progress.
- 'Slow Down' signs in Leighton Beck Rd and elsewhere in the parish were suggested as one way to reduce traffic speeds.
- the hope of opening up as a footpath the disused railway line from Hincaster to Arnside.

5. Conclusion and closure – there being no further questions the Chairman thanked all present and closed the meeting at 8.35pm.