

BEETHAM PARISH ASSEMBLY

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 15th March 2018 at the Heron Hall, Storth.

Present were Parish Councillors Brian Meakin (in the chair), Margaret Knowles and Ian Stewart, District Cllr Pete McSweeney, Parish Clerk John Scargill and eleven members of the public. Also AONB Manager Lucy Barron who gave a presentation.

1. Opening of the Parish Assembly and welcome – Cllr Brian Meakin opened proceedings by welcoming those present.

2. Apologies for absence – Parish Councillors Bob Pickup, Pru Jupe, Chris Noble and Steve Yates. Also District Cllr Pete McSweeney..

3. The minutes of the Annual Assembly, held on 16th March 2017 (previously circulated), were taken as read and signed by Cllr Meakin.

4. Review of the Parish Council's year 2017/18 (Cllr Brian Meakin) – The AONB Plan Document (DPD) had now been approved, with two controversial sites in Beetham parish (B70 & B116) excluded. Land matters, as usual, occupied much of the Parish Council's time. These included the very important issues of the new crematorium at Beetham Hall, work at Sandside Quarry and plans by a local resident to provide Beetham School with a dedicated field for sports and other outdoor activities. Also in Beetham village, deliberate obstruction of the ghost footpath at the bottom end of Leighton Beck Road continued to cause problems for pedestrians. A bus shelter on the B5282 had been demolished by a car and was now in process of being replaced. A solar-powered, modern speed indicator device had been purchased and installed along Sandside Promenade in an effort to reduce traffic speeds. Additional information boards had been produced in collaboration with the AONB and were to be placed at strategic sites in the parish. Plans for a public defibrillator in Beetham village were expected to reach fruition in 2018 and there was good progress with the installation of superfast broadband in Storth. A new outdoor bench, donated by a parish resident, had been sited at the Four Lane Ends cross-roads. Parish Council members were disappointed with Natural England's proposal for its coastal path project to bypass upper parishes of the Kent estuary (inc. Beetham) and would formally be asking for this to be reconsidered. Grants for local activity groups continued to be available from Parish Council funds but, strangely, were rarely applied for.

5. Presentation - AONB Manager Lucy Barron gave an interesting, comprehensive and informative talk on her organisation's objectives, activities and plans. This was followed by questions from the audience, which included the need to keep bridle etc paths accessible, Park Road resurfacing delays, persistent flooding in Yans Lane, Storth, and potholes in Storth Road.

6. Conclusion and closure – there being no further questions the Chairman thanked all present and closed the meeting at 9.30pm.

The meeting was followed by refreshments and informal conversation between all present.