

BEETHAM PARISH ASSEMBLY

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday 17th March 2022 held at Heron Hall, Storth.

Present were Parish Councillors Brian Meakin (in the chair), Peter Greifenberg, Paul Harnett and Steve Yates. Also D Cllr Rupert Audland, Parish Clerk John Scargill, speaker Peter Hosking (CCC – Highways) and eight members of the public.

1. Opening of the Parish Assembly and welcome – Cllr Brian Meakin opened proceedings by welcoming those present. He also referred, with sadness, to the sudden death of Parish Councillor Brian Dean, the most recently appointed and a hard working member of the Parish Council.

2. Apologies for absence – Parish Councillors Crayston, Dewar and Knowles.

3. The minutes of the Annual Assembly, held on 19th April 2021 (previously circulated), were taken as read and authorised for signing by Cllr Meakin.

4. Review of the Parish Council's year 2021/22 (Cllr Brian Meakin) – Cllr Meakin welcomed the resumption of face-to-face meetings, post Covid restrictions. He reminded those present of the electoral organisation of Beetham parish into two wards, East (Beetham village, Hale and Farleton) with four councillors and West (Storth and Carr Bank) with five councillors, recognising its extensive geographical layout and the disproportionate spread of its residents.

Seasonal flooding remained the dominant issue in the East Ward, but progress with agreeing and implementing effective ways of dealing with this had been disappointing despite meetings with Environment Agency representatives. Following a detailed professional enquiry of a worrying leachate from the defunct refuse tip at Hale Marble Quarry, the report had concluded that the site was toxin-free, despite its unattractive appearance.

In the West Ward, and despite its high health and safety rating, progress with extending standing room for Milnthorpe-bound passengers at the B5282 Carr Bank Road-end bus stop had been very slow. The small size of the job and its traffic control requirements had meant that interested contractors had been hard to find and/or give it a high priority. However, a damaged seat at Four Lane Ends, Storth, had been replaced, the parish council notice board in Storth Square had been completely refurbished and would soon be installed in a free-standing position. Plans for a wild-flower verge near Four Lane Ends had also been announced. Concerns remained amongst local residents over the continued closure of The Ship Inn, despite reassurances from the owner.

The care and management of trees on Parish Council-owned land was a high but necessary expense, together with the maintenance of boundary walls and fences. Traffic speeds throughout the parish were often too high and dangerous and control measures were a priority. The Parish Council had agreed to take over responsibility for the maintenance of the war memorials in Beetham and Storth. New trees were to be planted at suitable parish locations in celebration of the Queen's forthcoming platinum jubilee.

5. Presentation by Peter Hosking, CCC Highways – a concise but comprehensive presentation attracted a variety of interesting questions and some helpful answers.

6. Cllr Meakin concluded the meeting at 9.15 pm, thanking the speaker and all who had attended.

7. Refreshments were then served as those present mingled and chatted informally.