

The Minutes of the Deepings St James Annual Parish Meeting held virtually at 7pm on Thursday 29 April 2021.

Zoom Meeting Link

<https://zoom.us/j/93121428866?pwd=Um9WeE5nVDY2N0xFLzZDZjdDVU5BUT09>

Meeting ID: 931 2142 8866

Passcode: 086962

Present: Parish Councillors Bowell, Dilks (also District), Fowler, Gilbert, Hall, Halls, Hardy, Hosking, Little, Robinson, Shinkins-Hoppe, Thomas (also District), County Councillor Dobson, Suzanne Moon Stamford Mercury News Editor, Julie Fortnum Parish Clerk and Louise Brown Assistant Clerk.

1. Welcome.

Councillor Steve Gilbert welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that the purpose of an Annual Parish Meeting is to allow Deeping St James Parish Council to tell the electors what the Parish Council has done over the last year and what is planned. It is a legal requirement to hold the meeting between 1 March and 1 June and it has been advertised for the public to attend.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 23 April 2019.

Agreed.

3. Report on the activities of the Parish Council.

Councillor Gilbert gave his report starting by saying that this time last year everyone was beginning to come to terms with the situation and Zoom meetings were a new concept to many. The Parish Council had to understand what they could do and how they could do it.

The re-organisation of the office IT was finalised this time last year so that staff could work from home.

The former Assistant Clerk, Kathy Bowles, and one of the Maintenance Staff, Neil Jibb, retired during 2020 and a new Assistant Clerk, Louise Brown, and two Maintenance Staff, David Hedley and Richard Gregg joined the Parish Council in 2020.

There had also been a change of Parish Councillors over the last two years with Mike Ward, Brian Barber, Andy Pelling, Jim Blessett, Les Green, Si Fox, Caroline Boreham, Zoe Kornfeld, Karen Watts, Wendy Lilley and Graham Hardy resigning. Councillor Gilbert expressed his and the Parish Council's appreciation for the input of all those Councillors, some of who were very experience Councillors, who had left a hole. New Councillors who have been co-opted to the Parish Council are Graham Fowler, Peter Robinson, Diane Rose and Jack Little. He acknowledged that new personnel and Councillors is

always a challenge whilst they are on the steep learning curve and enthusiasm has sometimes had to be reined in.

Councillor Gilbert advised that the Parish Council had -

Kept the Allotments and the Cemetery open and accessible;

Kept the recreation areas and play equipment open when possible and safe and clean when open;

Continued to regularly empty general waste and dog waste bins;

Continued to act as the Burial Authority and organise burials and interments,

Continued as a planning consultee of the local Planning Authority, South Kesteven District Council;

Regularly liaised with District Council, County Council and the Police reporting issues such as potholes, updating Councillor and electoral registers, liaising and pushing forward for the proposed new Leisure Centre, engaging in re-wilding projects, engaging in trying to stop anti-social behaviour and Covid breeches;

Organising litter picking events and providing a community skip;

Acting as a point of contact for volunteer cells;

Involved with funding and supporting the Feed Deepings Project along with the Round Table;

Funded and supported the Deepings Community Library and the Deepings Youth Group who both continued to operated virtually;

Financially supported and administered funds for the Deepings Business Support Group;

Financially supported the 'Deepingathon', local organisations and National Charities and also;

Worked with the neighbouring Town Council in Market Deeping on flooding issues, Highway verge grass cutting and the Deepings Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Gilbert concluded by expressing thanks to the Parish Clerk and Assistant Clerk who had worked throughout putting in place all that was necessary for the Parish Council to continue to operate safely and legally. He also thanked the Maintenance staff who had also worked throughout the lockdowns and restrictions.

Finally, Councillor Gilbert thanked the Parish Councillors who commit their time, unpaid, especially Councillor Kate Shinkins-Hoppe who had fulfilled the role of Vice Chairperson over the past two years. Councillor Gilbert also expressed the Parish Council's appreciation for the work of the District Councillors and County Councillor.

4. Any questions from the public.

Councillor Thomas requested that the involvement of the Deepings Lions and Rotary Clubs as well as the Round Table be noted in relation to the Feed Deepings project.

Councillor Dilks welcomed Councillor Gilbert's report on a very strange year and acknowledged that the Deeping St James Annual Parish Meeting was usually a very special event which was well attended by 100 plus guests. The APM usually included the presentation of the Annual Making A Difference Awards and that everyone who attends always has positive things to say about the event. He hoped that later on in the year another event would take place so that Making A Difference Awards can be presented.

5. Close.

Councillor Gilbert thanked everybody for attending and agreed with Councillor Dilks that another meeting should be held at a later date in the year where the Parish Council can celebrate the community and all the good things that they have made happen.

Signed

Date