

Minutes of the FEERING ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY held in the OAK ROOM of FEERING COMMUNITY CENTRE on MONDAY 23rd. MAY 2016 at 8pm

Councillors present: Cllr. P. Lees (Chairman), Cllr. M. Lakin (Vice-Chairman), Cllr. L. Blackburn, Cllr. M. Eddolls, Cllr K. Evans, Cllr M. Bonner and Kevin B. Money (Clerk)

District Councillor Robert Mitchell
RCCE Jan Stobart

Also in attendance were 19 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from ECC Cllr Lady P. Newton, District Councillor J. Elliott & Cllr J. Inglis

2. Approval of Minutes of 2015 Annual Parish Assembly

Louise Irons proposed and Maggie Eddolls seconded that the 2015 Annual Parish Assembly minutes were a true and accurate of the meeting. **This was carried unanimously**

3. Chairman's Report and Presentation

Cllr M. Lakin (as Chairman of the Parish Council until May 2016) gave the Chairman's report for 2016 stated that at the Parish Annual Meeting in May 2015 I was elected as Chair and Helen Edwards Vice Chair, for the first time in many years I can report that this year there has been no change of Parish Councillors and I would like to thank each one for the professionalism and commitment they give to their responsibilities as Councillors. I know they have the best interest of the village when attending meetings and representing the council.

This year, Councillors attended twelve Council meetings, as well as representing Feering at over thirteen other organisations both locally and at District and County level. The Planning Committee has met fifteen times and considered many diverse applications. The Council remains grateful to Jane Palmer, our Tree Warden, who continues to provide advice on all local issues relating to trees, and also to Mike Bonner who represented the parish on passenger transport issues. Our thanks also go to Graham Adams, the village handyman and grass cutting contractor, who tidies and maintains the village to such a high standard.

PARISH OFFICE

After our Parish Clerk, Martique, left our employ in early January, we were lucky to gain Kevin Money our new clerk. Kevin has been working as a clerk with two other Parish Councils and is a qualified CiLCA. (Certificate in Local Council Award). His experience as a clerk has made the transition a lot easier for the Council and I would like to thank Kevin for his help and support. As part of health and safety measures the Council has made a number of improvements to the parish office – the cupboards have been tidied up and old minutes were taken to the Essex records office for Archiving, files from the shelves have been stored in the loft for safe keeping and it's nice to see a tidy office. In addition, the CCTV has been upgraded and both the clerk and Feering Community Centre Administrator have been issued with personal safety alarms. Crime has not increased merely a precaution!

TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS

Volume and speed issues remain high on the Council's agenda and the Council supports The A12 Village Traffic Action Group, supported by 5 Parish Councils and the Heritage Society. The group lobby for road improvements in the area. They are in regular contact with Priti Patel MP to open the channels of communication regarding any scheme approved by the Essex Authority in respect of the A12. Local hauliers and businesses have also been written to for their views on current traffic problems. More recently the Council have been invited to attend the A120 forum, the forum to discuss the best way forward on how to engage with the public for consultation on a proposed new A120 route. There are two forums one held at Colchester and the other at Braintree. Feering were invited to join the Colchester group, the agendas set are identical but the Council felt that due to different Parishes attending each group the outcomes for discussion may differ and that's why Feering Councillors felt is beneficial attend both forums where possible

PLAYPARK

Back in the summer we had the misfortune to receive a RoSPA report which condemned the play equipment on the mound area, the equipment unbeknown to the Council had started to rot from

underneath and was considered unsafe, the Council had no choice but to remove the equipment the area is looking smart it has been turfed although now has limited play value. Quotes received to replace the equipment are approximately £29,000, grants have been sought with limited success, unfortunately Feering is not considered to be disadvantaged enough to attract funding and the Council will therefore scale the project down to match available funds.

Feering Parish Council would like to thank Simon Gibbs for his hard work in maintaining the playing field to its current high standards. We are sure his efforts are recognised by the village and specifically appreciated by the football teams and school who play and train on the pitches.

PRECEPT

The Parish precept for the next year has been set at £38,660. This is an increase from £48.10 to £51.74 for a Band D property the Council found it necessary to increase the precept because Braintree District Council reduced the Parish Support and Council Tax Grant again for this year. The council have received other grants of £13,790 which will give a total income for 2016/17 of £52450.

The general running costs have increased the Council have allocated monies to the Neighbourhood Plan and there are other projects the council would like to complete. With the warm and wet weather conditions mole activity on the Playing Field has increased and the Council has had to draw from its reserves for prevention measures.

The Precept pays for the maintenance of the 29 parish owned street lights, the bus shelters and seats in the village. We budget in the precept for the playing field together with the skate park and play equipment. The Council organise the Manned Refuse Lorries that visit the village for nine months of the year, pay GG Adams Maintenance Services (Graham to us) our contracted handyman. The Council maintains the Parish office and pay for the salary of the part time Parish Clerk. The Council is also responsible for keeping the footpaths in Feering clear and passable, including the rafted path. Funding towards this is obtained from the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme run by Essex County Council, though this will reduce for 2016/17.

Looking forward to the current year the Council have a number of projects they wish to complete we would like to install new play equipment on the mound and have been successful in obtaining a grant from the Community Initiative Fund (CIF) for £10,000, together with monies in the playpark budget the Council hope to complete the project very soon

A second project which has been ongoing for some time is to replace the fence along the footpath 16 which is now extremely worn, all the posts will need replacing. We wanted to replace the fence in the 2015/16 financial year a grant was applied for but yet again we were turned down. Funds have now been allocated from reserves.

The Parish Council continue to support the Neighbourhood Plan Group, the A12 vehicle traffic action group and the Feering Community Association.

Our biggest challenge will be the large scale development which has been imposed on the village. There is still one vacant position for a Parish Councillor. Anyone that has an interest in the village and can offer freely their time at least one Tuesday a month please contact our Parish Clerk Kevin. on clerk@feeringparishcouncil.wanadoo.co.uk

The Council held the Annual General Meeting last week I decided to stand down as Chair and Paul Lees has been elected Chairman for the forthcoming year. Thank you.

4. Update on District Issues

Cllr R. Mitchell informed the meeting that he was speaking on behalf of Cllr Lady P. Newton as she was at a BDC meeting.

BDC has won again the Essex Wildlife prize.

Looking at the Authority for the Year. The Solar panels in Lakes Road and Halstead / Braintree Essex energy switch which has been operated more locally. BDC flagged it up in November and surprisingly BDC had the biggest take up saving over £300,000pa

The waste services are being expanded to flats and blocks, however black bins are still being used for recycling items and BDC needs to start re-educating residents.

NEEP have agreed to 2 new schemes in Kelvedon and Feering. Station Road in Kelvedon (yellow box in Station Road is illegal) and will be removed and a scheme to legalise it is underway. The Bridge Meadow site will be upgraded.

People: Home inspection and handyman services to elderly people are being delivered to activities to live well.

My Community Fund is coming to an end. Each Councillor now is being given £1500 to allocated or to share it among other districts

BDC is investing £23m towards infrastructure in the district.

Working in Partnership: A120 & A12 money is being set aside to upgrade the A12 to 3 lanes (Chelmsford – Colchester by 2020) this ties in with the BDC local Plan.

Meeting with Crown Estates: A double headed junction at Feering and Kelvedon is required as the problem is Kelvedon High Street and is the main sticking point.

Both Kelvedon and Feering maps are not quite right.

5. Update from Cllr Lee Blackburn regarding the Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr L. Blackburn informed the meeting that the group had been meeting monthly for just over a year now and has been gathering evidence towards a plan which will help shape our village for the next 15 years. A Neighbourhood Plan becomes a statutory document used to decide planning applications and is our best hope of getting our voice heard in Braintree's planning policy.

To date we have had two open days to gather feedback and compiled a Vision Statement, Village Character and an Affordable Housing Needs Survey. We have sought information from Essex Wildlife and Environmental Agencies and had general joint meetings with Kelvedon on subjects that pertain to both villages (although we are submitting separate plans). We have attended a few networking meetings through the RCCE with Coggeshall and surrounding areas.

We have all been taken aback with Braintree's proposal for Kelvedon with Feering, in that Feering has been designated a "Strategic Growth Location" which roughly means that the large housing allocation is the same as the creation of a new small town/large village. The proposal for Kelvedon and Feering development plan will go to the Local Plan sub. Committee on 25th. May, then the whole draft Local Plan will go before the full Council committee on the 26th. May and will be expected to be approved by the Full Council on 20th. June 2016.

The consultation on the draft Local Plan will run from 27th. June to 19th. August 2016. You, as an individual, can make comments of the draft plan by applying to speak at the meeting on the 20th. June, or register on the BDC website.

A Neighbourhood Plan has to conform with the strategic direction of the Local Plan, so it can't change the eventual housing number, but it can influence the infrastructure, the site layout, design plus type and tenure of the housing and general feel of the area concerned. Cllr L. Blackburn went on to say that she has heard from the Kelvedon Neighbourhood Plan that they are having negative comments about our Neighbourhood Plan committee as they have several focus groups, but I can only say that we have been asking for volunteers for over a year now and especially the younger demographic so that we can get the Facebook and Twitter link, but so far to no avail. We desperately need volunteers to help in any capacity that you think would be useful.

The long awaited figures for Feering with Kelvedon should be published this month and hopefully this will focus our efforts to come up with the best solution to our village's needs in the future.

6. Questions from members of the public

Brian Hall asked in terms of the plan are Feering going at some time as Kelvedon or is Feering designated in it's own right. Kelvedon will have an overlap with Feering.

Housing numbers have not changed from what has been planned.

Jan Stobart (RCCE) stated that the Neighbourhood Plan cannot change the numbers, however, the residents are entitled to comment to BDC – the NP is not a lobbying vehicle. When BDC local plan is approved the NP job is to see them. Plan A is to lobby against it. Lobbying against BDC proposals, but NIMBY is not allowed. BDC has advised that this is the best place. New school, road network traffic free area is plan B.

Could the Parish Council find out why Hatfield Peverel was rejected by the Housing officer?

Mark Leslie was in favour of taking a fair share of houses but his question to DC Robert Mitchell was that he was horrified that 1000 houses has come to Feering as well as a Gypsy site in Feering. This is in contradiction and DC R. Mitchell must lobby BDC to get the houses reduced. DC R. Mitchell answered saying that HE has not allowed 1000 houses to be built. He has also made representation to BDC and Crown Estates. More areas of development need to be considered. However, this is up to planners to decide at BDC. Members debate and planning committee decide on where houses could be delivered.

Crown Estates may be approved. He only found out last week about the Gypsy site.

Robert Crayston: He knows a lot about the village especially about the Gateway A120 strategic development. There has been uproar with Garden settlement. He also stated that Feering and Marks Tey will be lost in the future if Crown estates 1000 homes go through.

After a great discussion on the 1,000 houses from residents and Councillors it was suggested to the Council that a public Residents meeting be held to get the views of the residents of Feering. Paul Cotterall informed the meeting that Kelvedon & Feering are designated as a strategic growth area. There are more areas set aside for growth area.

BDC has set a little timescale to join Feering / Kelvedon together. Before this Kelvedon & Feering were classed as separate villages

Cllr M. Bonner suggested that a leaflet drop is done by FPC.

Christine Sapwell asked about publicity. There is only one Noticeboard and that is at the school.

Could the Parish Council purchase another noticeboard and place it on Feering Hill by bus stop?

The Parish Council would place this on the agenda for new noticeboard

DC R. Mitchell supported the new PC noticeboard

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed.....15th. May 2017

Paul Lees