

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL BAWDESWELL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 4<sup>th</sup> MAY 2017 AT THE CHURCH.**

Present: B. Cunliffe (Chair), J. Mallen, J. Lilwall, R. Reed and A. Toomey  
Mrs. J Boxall (Clerk)

Members of the public – 4

Cllr Bill Cunliffe opened the meeting at 7pm and gave the following report on behalf of the Parish Council.

This year has been a year of momentous decisions regarding the future of our village.

Despite these decisions, the Parish Council will continue the fight to preserve the character and appearance of our beautiful village.

Losing the battle against the granting of planning permission for 35 new dwellings on the Two Fields Way site, was a bad start. Breckland Council did not listen to the numerous parishioners who voiced their objections on the Breckland Planning website, or the objections of the Parish Council.

Later in the year, the same property developers submitted a further application to have 44 new dwellings on the same site, an increase of 22% on the original application. The PC has objected to this latest application, as have large numbers of parishioners. To date the application is shown as 'Undecided'.

Even worse news came when Breckland announced that Bawdeswell was to become a 'Local Service Centre' and will be as soon as Breckland ratify their decision. This will, in my opinion, open the floodgates to property developers who will see a green flag being waved in Bawdeswell's direction now that Breckland are on record as saying we have sufficient infrastructure to support further development. Those of us who live here know this is not the case.

This Parish Council is determined to fight for our village and we will continue to object to all planning applications which are outside the 'Settlement Boundary'

So having started with the bad news, there is also a lot of good news.

The new village hall continues to be very successful. An active trustees' group have ensured bookings for the hall are increasing, evidenced by the fact that even the PC could not get a booking for the Annual Parish Meeting, and so we were grateful to All Saints Church for allowing us to use the church for the meeting. The village hall now has events for old and young alike and offers numerous and diverse events, more than I can ever remember in the 25 years I have lived in the village. It is especially pleasing to see local families using the hall for social celebrations.

The village hall car park was eventually completed this year and is a big improvement on the old car park.

The Parish Council and the Village Hall Trustees have a good working relationship which bodes well for the future.

The Church has also had massive changes and it is hoped these changes will be to the benefit of Bawdeswell villagers. There have also been some excellent church fund raising events held at the Village Hall.

The daily bus service now goes through the village on each journey, justifying the PC's badgering of the bus company.

The Community Car Scheme continues to provide an excellent service for local people who do not have the means to get to doctors' surgeries or hospital. They are desperately short of drivers and need volunteers.

Whilst on the subject of volunteers, David Shannon has left the Parish Council and will be sorely missed. However, we hope he will continue to lead the 'Saga Louts' in their excellent work of maintaining and repairing the recreation ground, Adams Pit and other village locations. His leaving the Parish Council has left us with a vacancy for a councillor. Bawdeswell needs a full complement of councillors in order to properly reflect the views of the village. Any volunteers?

It was also good this year to co-opt Andrew Toomey on to the Parish Council, replacing William Mason, and I am sure Andrew will be a big asset.

So it has been an up and down sort of year. When required, the villagers rallied round and objected in large numbers to planning applications which they felt would have an adverse effect on the village. I would like to thank all the villagers who took time to attend meetings and add comments to the Breckland Planning web site showing proof if it were needed that the 'Spirit of Bawdeswell' is still strong.

Finally, Bawdeswell is a great village - one worth fighting for, and I can assure you that this Parish Council will do all in its power to maintain its character and appearance. We will also strive to ensure that all our residents will continue to enjoy village life and all that Bawdeswell has to offer.

Members of the public were then invited to address the Council.

There was discussion regarding the Local Service Centre designation and concern was expressed about the lack of communication with Breckland / Capita on planning matters. A meeting is to be held with Breckland to address these concerns. The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council's priorities would depend on the outcome of the Local Service Centre designation.

There being no further business, the Parish Meeting was closed at 7.30pm.

