

**MINUTES OF THE BOLTON-LE-SANDS PARISH ASSEMBLY
HELD IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE
ON THURSDAY 30th MARCH 2017**

Present: Cllr K. Budden (Chairman)
Cllrs:
M Archer, T Bell, B Bond, G. Gibbs, A. Kay, M. Leak, S. Lomax, F. Ryan.
Over 110 Local Government Electors.

Introduction: The Chairman welcomed everyone present and introduced the clerk and members of the Council.

Minutes: Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 26th March 2015 were accepted as a true record.

Apologies: Cllr Craddock

Attendance: The Clerk reported on the individual attendances of Councillors: Cllr Archer 59% Bell 67%; Bond 82%; Budden 92%; Craddock 67%; Gibbs 100%, Kay 59%; Leak 92%; Lomax 100%, Ryan 82%.

Chairman's Report:

The chairman spoke of the closure of the Library and the parish council's continued work to try to get the decision reversed although County Council would not budge on its decision. In view of this, the parish council is trying to persuade County to include Bolton-le-Sands on the mobile route. In view of the public voluntary support, it will be a discussion point at the next parish council meeting. In the meantime, the clerk has asked County for a breakdown of costs involved to run the Library. The chairman spoke of the non-involvement of the County Councillor for this area, Alycia James who resigned before Christmas and hoped her replacement, when elections are held later this year, will represent us once again. The chairman thanked the support of the City Councillors who always attend parish council meetings when possible.

The matter of the public toilets in Main Street is still under discussion as the City Council has greatly reduced its subsidy to maintain them. The parish council was looking to relocate them to the recreation area, but the cost of building new ones was excessive. The parish council is currently in discussion with the Village Hall Committee to create a toilet accessible for all.

Cllr Ryan has worked very hard to keep an access across what used to be the Packet Boat car park. After considerable discussion by the Regulatory Committee, it was agreed to make an Order to record the route for pedestrian use.

The chairman confirmed that there are no plans to consider a one-way system through the village, although consideration is being given to introduce parking restrictions in the immediate vicinity of Packet Lane junction to help address some of the reported issues there.

The chairman listed works authorised by the parish council, re-instatement of the car park at Morecambe Lodge, new digital cameras for the CCTV system at the recreation area, the sports pavilion has been repainted and the guttering, fascia boards and downspouts have been replaced.

The work of the Parish Lengthsman, Mike Ashton was mentioned and his involvement, along with Louise Belcher, with the Woodland Management Project which is a scheme to preserve the rare trees, removing diseased trees and creating viewing points as well as re-opening overgrown routes and the control of the spread of holly. A survey of the woodland has been carried out and a Management Plan prepared. The parish council ring-fenced £1000 for this work although grant aid has also been applied for. To support the work of the volunteers the parish council has purchased new tools. The chairman expressed his

concern at the amount of litter picking that Mike is required to do around the village. He has improved the Pinfold area by removing the tree, making a planting area, replacing the benches with new ones and repainting the pump. He also oversaw the felling of the diseased tree within the boundary hedge between the recreation field and the school and organised the planting of 200 crocus corms which were donated to the village through Cllr Craddock. The chairman thanked members of the public who donated commemorative seats which Mike organises. He also organises the collection, decorating and finally disposal of the annual Christmas tree and the parish council is grateful to the residents of Bolton Lodge who allow it to be sited on their forecourt.

The Bowling Green's Committee has once again been successful in the sale of its permits and Alan Swindlehurst, the greensman, was thanked for the work he does on the greens all year round. He organises a winter tournament which also brings money in to maintain them. Geoff Forrest was also thanked for the work and support he gives to both the club and the committee.

The parish council has been successful in obtaining grant aid from the War Memorial's Trust to employ a Conservation Architect who has gone out to tender for the refurbishment works and the parish council will be making another application for grant aid towards these works.

The parish council has, for the eighth year running, managed to keep its precept the same with no increase.

The Chairman then declared the meeting open for any questions or comments:

Louise Belcher (Thwaite Brow Woods Conservation Project) – thanked the parish council for its continued support. The group appreciates the assistance given to them by Mike Ashton as the Lancashire County Council Countryside Service has now shut down. Last Spring, they commissioned a new Woodland Management Plan to be prepared by local consultant Rebecca Oaks, as the previous Plan ran from 1996 – 2001 so was well overdue. The work of the group has involved extending two new paths, maintaining the nest and bat boxes, halo thinning around the important species, working to reduce and eventually eradicate some of the garden escapees that are threatening to take over in parts of the woods and generally keeping the place looking tidy and well cared for. There have been some incidents of antisocial behavior which is very disheartening such as setting fire to trees and damaging or destroying protected plants. The Group is always looking for more volunteers.

There was a long discussion with members of the public regarding the loss of the Library and suggestions of ways to re-open it. It was also suggested that social media such as Facebook should be set up to enable the parish council to keep in touch with its residents.

After great discussion, the chairman closed the meeting. He thanked everyone for attending with a special thanks to the ladies of the WI for serving refreshments.