

MINUTES of a SPECIAL MEETING of WHITWICK PARISH COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 6 JUNE 2013 at the St John the Baptist C of E School, Parsonwood Hill, Whitwick.

Present: Councillor R Woodward (Chairman) (In the Chair)

Cllrs A Barker, E Easom, T Gillard, D Howe, L Spence, J Straw and L Weaver

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Colledge, D Everitt and N Pearson

In Attendance: Mr P Ellis, Clerk and Mrs L Ellis, Assistant Clerk

20 members of the public

274. ADMISSION OF HONORARY FREEMAN – COUNCILLOR DEREK HOWE

The Chairman welcomed everyone to this Special Meeting which had been called to honour Councillor Derek Howe who that very day had completed forty years continuous service as an elected councillor for Whitwick. He paid his own personal tribute to Councillor Howe who had mentored him as a newly elected member back in 1990.

Councillor Spence referred to Councillor Howe's lifetime of service and how he shared his extensive experience to support fellow councillors and other organisations. He had been a stalwart servant politically to the Labour Party but more importantly to the people of Whitwick. It was a privilege to serve with him.

Councillor Straw spoke on behalf of both herself and the Whitwick Action Group. In her experience, Councillor Howe had always been hardworking, selfless and trustworthy – a true gentleman. He had made a significant contribution to the fight to protect the Green Wedge and set a shining example of community service.

Councillor Gillard stated that whilst their political views might differ, it was a privilege to speak in support of both Councillor Howe and his wife Molly. Councillor Howe was 'Mr Whitwick', a tremendous man of the people. If all councillors were like Councillor Howe, the District would be a better place.

In her much-regretted absence, Councillor Colledge had sent a message to say that it was an honour to work with someone who had devoted forty years service to Whitwick and wished to record her personal vote of thanks for all he had done.

The Clerk pointed out that he had known Councillor Howe for thirty eight of his forty years service. He always fought to get what he wanted for Whitwick and wasn't one to take no for an answer. Whitwick was fortunate to have had such a dedicated and determined representative. The Assistant Clerk asked to be associated with these comments.

From the floor, one of his former colliery colleagues stated succinctly that he 'couldn't fault him'. District Councillor John Legrys stated that while he and Councillor Howe didn't always see eye to eye, Councillor Howe invariably proved to be right. It was an honour to serve with him and he looked forward to doing so for many more years. Lesley Birtwistle, formerly of

.....Chairman's initials/signature

NWLDC and now with the NWL Homeless Project, also thanked Councillor Howe for his unfailing help and support. His immense knowledge and experience had been invaluable.

On being put to the vote, it was

Resolved Unanimously: That in exercise of its powers under Section 249(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1972 Act, the Parish Council hereby admits Councillor Derek Howe as the first Honorary Freeman of the Parish of Whitwick in recognition of the eminent services he has rendered to Whitwick by way of 40 years faithful and devoted service as an elected councillor chosen by local people to represent them and their community.

The Chairman then presented Councillor Howe with a framed scroll and his wife Molly with a bouquet.

Councillor Howe thanked the Council for bestowing him with this honour which he considered the greatest thing that could have happened to him. He paid tribute to the support of his wife and family and to other councillors because no one member did things alone. Much had been achieved during his time as a councillor and he hoped younger members of the community would come forward to carry things on.

The meeting terminated at 7.15 pm when all present were invited to enjoy a buffet which had been donated by councillors and staff

.....Chairman's initials/signature