

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Hexhamshire Parish Council held on Thursday 8th May 2014 at 7.30pm at Whitley Chapel Parish Hall.

5.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Hilary Kristensen and Alison Tweddle.

5.2 Election of Chairman

Andrew Nixon proposed Gill Whatmough and Davy Short seconded. This was agreed and Gill Whatmough took the Chair.

5.3 Election of Vice-Chairman

Gill Whatmough proposed Alastair Stevens and Greg Finch seconded. This was agreed.

5.4 Appointment of scrutineer for the annual accounts (John Henderson).

5.5 Appointment of 3 councillors to sign cheques.

Gill Whatmough, Alastair Stevens and Hilary Kristensen.

5.6 Appointment of 2 councillors onto the Wetlands Sub-Committee

Davy Short and Hilary Kristensen.

5.7 Appointment of 2 representatives to Dukesfield Smelting Arches

Greg Finch and Gill Whatmough.

5.8 Appointment of 3 councillors to the Sportsfield sub-committee.

It was agreed that this was not necessary.

5.9 Appointment of 3 councillors to Highways sub-committee.

Austin Iliffe, Edward Parker and Davy Short.

5.10 Appointment of 2 councillors to 4 Parishes BOATs committee.

Davy Short, Hilary Kristensen and Marge Rastall.

5.11 Appointment of 3 councillors to Broadband sub-committee.

Austin Iliffe, Greg Finch and Marge Rastall.

5.12 Appointment of Parish Council representative to Board of Parish Hall Trust

Austin Iliffe.

5.13 Appointment of Parish Council representative to Board of School Governors.

David Flatman.

5.14 Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 17th April 2014

It was agreed that the minutes were a true record of the meeting.

5.15 Matters Arising

11.16 It was reported that there is still the problem with the septic tank at St Helens and it was agreed that Two Castles should be contacted again.

3.5 There was no further information regarding the wetlands.

4.6.2 Austin Iliffe had emailed the Parish Council thanking them for the donation for the Parish Hall.

4.6.3 Gill Whatmough and Austin Iliffe had circulated notes regarding the planning training session which had received mixed reviews.

5.16 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

5.17 Correspondence

5.17.1 An email had been received regarding the renewal of the parish council insurance. It was agreed that the insurance be renewed for a 3 year period until 31st May 2017 at a reduced rate of £413.80. This was agreed and a cheque was raised.

5.17.2 The Citizens Advice Bureau had sent information to be placed on the noticeboard.

5.17.3 A receipt had been received from Zen Internet.

5.18 Financial Report

Treasurer's Account - £3725.95

Wetlands Account - £262.46

Savings Account - £13,794.46

5.19 Matters for discussion with the Unitary Councillor

5.19.1 Colin Horncastle reported that there were to be a further £32 million worth of cuts but these shouldn't affect rural areas. There is to be an

- increase of 1.9% in council tax.
- 5.19.2 Colin Horncastle reported that NCL are no longer running the leisure centres as the County Council is taking over the management.
- 5.19.3 There has been work done on the pothole problem in the area since the meeting with highways.
- 5.19.4 The highways department have begun to invest in new ditching equipment but it doesn't work in areas with roots so may have been better to employ contractors.
- 5.19.5 County Hall is to be sold and is to relocate to Ashington as the plan is to regenerate the area. Services are to be moved back to the market towns. NCC and Durham are to share legal services to save resources.
- 5.19.6 The local development framework is due to be adopted in December 2015 which includes some big issues including water quality, waste, housing, green belt. 900 houses are proposed in Hexham over a 20 year period.
- 5.19.7 There has been a succession of problems with broadband. Colin Horncastle agreed to ring John Cooper to find out what is happening about the lack of activity with the broadband issue.
- 5.19.8 Mr Horncastle advised that the post 16 transport will go ahead.
- 5.19.9 Problems are envisaged in Hexham in the summer due to the free parking.
- 5.19.10 The planning procedure is being reviewed. If the planners disagree with the parish council's view it has to go to committee. A proposal is being discussed to try to cut down the amount of time spent in committee.
- 5.19.11 Colin Horncastle was advised that a private contractor had offered to tar drives due to spare tar.

5.20 Smelting Arches

Information regarding the smelting arches can be found on the website and in the magazine.

5.21 Broadband

Discussions had been held with Anne Moyle of Newton regarding their Experiences with broadband. Newton currently has 30 private clients and 3 businesses. It is not cheap at present with a £150 connection fee and then a payment is made according to the speed you receive. Funds were raised through the lottery. Wildcard carry out the maintenance on the system. Austin Iliffe had contacted Wildcard. Austin requested help in marking up an ordnance survey map with the location of properties. Greg Finch offered to assist in this. The request was made that councillors write to Guy Opperman independently advising of the problems being experienced with broadband.

5.22 Highways

The request was made to Councillors to priorities areas needing attention by the Highways Department.

5.23 BOATs

Davy Short reported that all restricted byways are now open again. He also reported that the Forestry Commission have put up a lot of signs requesting help in identifying illegal use of byways.

5.24 Reports

Wetlands – it was reported that the water now only runs over the road in one place which is an improvement.

Hall – Fund raising – the table top sale raised £376, Ernie Coe and Friends were to take place on 9th May, table top sale on 21st June, Wildlife talk by Will Nichols on 5th September and the Christmas Fair on the 29th

November. Decisions are still to be awaited in connection with funding for the flat roof renovation. The decision has been taken to proceed with replacement hall windows and kitchen design company is to be approached. It was agreed to discuss the design before getting prices.

The toilets design is still to be done. It was agreed that this is quite urgent. It is necessary to encourage the use of the hall as the clubs are diminishing.

School – no report.

Sportsfield – no report.

5.25 Any Other Business

An email had been received requesting that the Parish Council consider replacing the noticeboard. It was agreed that it also needs re-siting.

Andrew Nixon agreed to provide information regarding this.

As there was no further business the meeting was declared closed.