

HAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A QUARTERLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

A Quarterly Meeting of Ham Parish Council took place on **Friday 23 November 2018 in Ham Village Hall at 8pm.**

Present: Mr R Buchanan-Dunlop (Chairman), Mr C Dean (Vice Chairman), Mr N Jones, Mr J Marriage, Lady Walker and 16 members of the public.

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: The minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held on 24 November 2017 were confirmed.

2. Police Report: PC J Mills gave a report for February. The two main issues were non-dwelling burglaries, particularly thefts of power tools and petrol, and thefts from vans in the Marlborough and Pewsey areas. Criminals had found a device for picking the locks of Ford Transit vans, and it was advisable to remove easily portable tools, etc from vans overnight. The arrest of three men wearing balaclavas on 9 December, following a sighting in Ham, was also mentioned. PC Mills said that the Police relied on local reporting of suspicious activity to do their work effectively. However, there were complaints that the Police responded too slowly to reports and rarely provided feedback. PC Mills said that this was due to a lack of manpower.

3. Finances: The Chairman reported that there was no change to the Parish finances. The request for a repeat precept of £1,500 had been submitted. Meanwhile the Parish Council held reserves of approximately £4,300, of which £1,000 was earmarked for repairs to Field Lane. Responding to a question about funding for the Village Hall, he said that the Village Hall would come up later in the agenda. In principle it seemed prudent to retain £2,000 in reserve to meet unforeseen contingencies, which meant that a sum in the order of £1,000 was available for other causes including the Village Hall.

4. Roads, Signs and Flooding: Mr N Jones said he had nothing specific to report. Wiltshire Council was still unable to resolve the problem of the ditch and flooding in the vicinity of Acorn Cottages because of buried BT cables. Complaints were made about the erosion of verges, largely due to the temporary parking of vans and the very wet weather, but little could be done about it. It was agreed that the Speedwatch signs should be removed as having no real use now and being unsightly.

5. Bridleways and Footpaths: It was noted that a number of minor problems needed to be sorted out: a fallen branch was partially blocking Field Lane at the far end; branches were also blocking the stile at the foot of the Ham Hill footpath; and wire netting needed to be replaced on the two stiles at the Old Rectory and the stile at the 'pig field'. It was also noted that the repair of Field Lane would be tackled again in the Spring.

6. Crown & Anchor: The meeting welcomed a proposal that the village should raise funds for the repainting and refurbishment of the sign outside the Crown & Anchor, as a gesture of thanks towards the renovation of the pub. The Chairman said that costs

were not yet known but were likely to be in the order of at least £1,000. Parish Council funds could not be used and it would necessary to raise the funds by public subscription. It was commented that Mr M Humphreys held some funds raised from when the pub was previously active, and it was agreed that he should be contacted in the first instance.

7. Christmas Lights and Carols on the Green: The Chairman said that although Christmas was now well in the past, this was the first opportunity for the Parish Council to thank publicly Mr C Dean and Mr D Bicknell for putting up and dismantling the Christmas lights on the Green and Mrs Sonja Kristensen for her assistance to them, and also to thank Lady Walker and members of the Village Hall Committee for arranging Carols on the Green.

8. First World War Commemoration: The Chairman suggested that the Village should consider some special event, in addition to the annual Service of Remembrance, to commemorate the centenary of the ending of the First World War and those from Ham who were killed in that war. This was agreed in principle, and it was also agreed that the framework of any event needed to be decided at the next Parish Council meeting in May.

9. Parish Magazine: The Chairman reported that following M R Stevens' retirement from having delivered the Parish Magazine for 29 years, Mr R Miller had kindly volunteered to take on the delivery to the centre of the Village once he had recovered from a knee operation. In the interim the Chairman said that he hoped to get a Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme volunteer to fill in.

10. Data Protection: The Chairman said that the Parish Council had to take note of the General Data Protection Regulation due to come into force on 25 May 2018. Although the Parish Council held no data bases outside the Register of Electors, consent from individuals named in the register would be required in future for their names to be used publicly. Mr C Dean was appointed as the Parish Council Data Protection Officer.

11. Best Kept Village Competition: It was decided not to enter this year's CPRE Best Kept Village competition.

12. Hog Roast: Lady Walker reported that the hog had been ordered for the Hog Roast on Sunday 17 June 2018. Estimated numbers would be required in due course.

13. Village Hall: Lady Walker, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee, said that a report would be appearing in the next edition of the Parish Magazine explaining that essential work needed to be carried out on the Village Hall to preserve it for future generations. The work included new heating, lighting and plumbing, together with general maintenance and decoration. The estimated cost was at least £10,000. Some of this could be provided from the Village Hall reserves and a grant application would be made to Wiltshire Council, but otherwise funds would need to be raised by public subscription. The Village Hall AGM would be held on Tuesday 10 April at 7pm; all would be welcome.

14. Litter: Mr A Melsom said that litter was very bad on the road leading from the Village to the A338. He and his daughter had collected some of it, but considerably more needed to be dealt with. It was agreed that a blitz on litter throughout the Parish should be carried out in March as part of the Keep Britain Tidy campaign.

15. Date of Next Meeting: The date of the next meeting, the AGM, was agreed as Wednesday 9 May at 7pm.