

HAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Parish of Ham took place on Monday 17th May 2021 in Ham Village Hall at 7pm.

Present: Mr. C Dean (Chairman), Lady Walker (Vice-chairman), Mr. J Marriage, Mr. M Humphreys, and Mr. A Taylor, and 9 members of public.

1. Apologies: none.

2. Election of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Mr. Charles Dean was proposed as Chairman by Mr. Marriage and seconded by Mr. Taylor. Lady Walker was proposed as Vice-Chairman by Mr. Humphreys and seconded by Mr. Dean.

3. To confirm the minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held on 22 February 2021

The Minutes of the quarterly meeting held on 22nd February 2021 were confirmed, and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Alistair Taylor to the council and thanked him for putting his name forward. He went on to explain that we would advertise officially for a sixth member and discuss at the next meeting.

5. Finances

5a. The annual governance statement was approved by the council.

Mr Buchanan-Dunlop presented the Financial Statement and reported that the parish council accounts were in very good shape, ending last year with just over £7,000, and in addition we received £1,500 from Wiltshire as our annual precept.

He continued to explain that we were not expecting to spend the full £1,500 on standard expenditure despite increase expected in mowing and hog roast costs. This leaves around £4,000 in the kitty, which would leave £3,000 in reserves as per the approach of previous years. Of the £4,000, £2,000 must be spent on community projects and this must be reported back to Wiltshire Council.

The accounts have been internally audited by Mr. Nigel Hawley. The council extended their thanks for Mr. Hawley's continued help.

As our expenditure is below the £45k limit Mr. Buchanan Dunlop explained that we can apply for an exemption from external audit. The council approved this, and Mr. Buchanan Dunlop agreed to send on the required forms.

5b. The annual finance statement was approved by the council.

5c. The council unanimously agreed to renew Mr Buchanan-Dunlop's role as Responsible Finance Officer and offered their continued thanks for his assistance in managing the financial affairs of the council.

The Chairman raised one item of new expenditure, the new flag for £140.27 and agreed to send Mr. Buchanan Dunlop the full details.

The Chairman reminded the council that we have already agreed some expenditure for a new notice board but that this would be delayed for a month or two due to the best kept village competition judging.

6. Roads, Signs and Speed Limits

Chairman explained that Mr. Bicknell, who was no longer on the council, previously looked after this area and Mr. Taylor agreed to takeover.

The Chairman went on to explain that there were some items outstanding from previous meetings. He thanked Mr. Simmonds and others for their continuing efforts in contacting firms and individuals found to be speeding through the village and noted that this had been hugely successful.

The council previously agreed to look into three smiley faces and chicanes. Mr. Taylor commented that for the smiley faces it may be worth looking at other villages and explained that they were expensive to buy. He also explained that keeping the same location reduced their effectiveness and suggested the idea of sharing the cost and the maintenance with other villages. Mr. Humphreys agreed on the issue of familiarity being a factor.

Mr. Taylor said that he had spoken with Wiltshire council recently, and that as a result Spray Road had been swept and work had started on fixing the hole near the border with Berkshire. He suggested that we stop using the Wiltshire mobile application as this was often used as a storage bin for complaints, explaining that a better approach was direct communication. He summarised by saying he would continue to be more proactive with the aim of making the roads safer, quieter, and more friendly.

The topic of verge damage was raised, and all agreed this was a major issue. Mr. Humphreys commented that there were a huge number more delivery drivers and often in the wrong size vehicles which added to the problem.

7. Flooding

Mr. Humphreys and Mr. Taylor both raised the flooding problems just past the Acorns, and secondly at the front of Porch Cottages, next to the pub. Mr. Humphreys agreed to continue to look after flooding and would investigate these two issues.

8. Bridleways and Footpaths

Mr. Marriage said he was happy to continue to take responsibility for footpaths and moved on to explain the situation with Field Lane. He explained that he had hoped for progress recently but that we had now been let down on a delivery of planings six times. He has contacted various individuals, including Stuart Wheeler but so far to no avail.

A discussion was had about finding planings elsewhere, but with an estimate of £90 per tonne and a requirement for 100 tonnes it was agreed to keep contacting Brennans and Stuart Wheeler to try and get a free delivery.

Mr. Marriage moved on to report on the replacement of the styles at each end of the Baring's garden with kissing gates. He explained that to raise the money from public sources would require significant effort. The Chairman suggested that we consider allocating some Parish funds to this and it was agreed this would be a good use of the Community Infrastructure Levy funds. Mr. Marriage confirmed that the budget would be less than £1000 and that the Barings had kindly agreed to contribute.

The Chairman explained that he had received a request from PCAP to support the new Walkers are Welcome Accreditation and this was unanimously agreed by the council.

A question was raised from the audience with regards to the state of the fencing on the ridgeway above Ham Hill, explaining that the wires had fallen into the sides causing a danger to horses and other animals. Mr. Taylor, representing the landowner, explained that the fence had to be retained and that it was a massive undertaking to effect repair, not least as this has been the situation for over a decade, largely caused by excessive vehicular traffic. Mr. Taylor agreed to have a look at the location in question to see if anything could be done.

9. Best Kept Village Competition

The Chairman thanked everyone for all their efforts in tidying the village and confirmed that judging started today. Mr. Humphreys echoed this and said that everyone had done a wonderful job picking up the litter around the village.

10. Village Party

The Chairman suggested Sunday, July 11th for the Village Hog Roast. This was agreed and the Chairman agreed to investigate finding a Hog Roast machine and would ask Andy Dolan who has helped on previous years.

Mr. Taylor suggested that next year, to coincide with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, we should consider an evening event as a change to encourage the older children to attend. On the same topic, Mr. Humphreys agreed to think through options of planting trees as part of the celebration for discussion at the next meeting.

11. Correspondence

None.

12. Any Other Business

The Chairman explained that our defibrillator required regular checks so that it continues to be available for use and asked for volunteers to contact him.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman agreed to circulate potential dates via email.

The meeting closed at 7:40pm