



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ANSTEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY, 15TH APRIL 2019 COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM

Present: Andrew Marchant - Chairman
David Oxley – Vice Chair and Publicity, Village Hall Committee
Jan Pledger (also Village Hall Committee)
Simon Bagnall
David House

County Councillor: Jeff Jones

Village Hall Committee: Kate Oxley – Chairman of Village Hall Committee

Others Present: Peter Boylan – Braughing Parish Councillor
Ann Grimsdale
Jenny and Gus Goymour
Tony Pledger

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Clr Amanda Parker
Mark Jacobs

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

3. MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 23RD APRIL 2018

These were approved and the chairman was permitted to sign them as a true record of the meeting last year on 23rd April 2018.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2018-19

Firstly, thank you for attending and I welcome you all to our 2019 Annual Parish Meeting.

I would like to express my thanks to my fellow councillors for their invaluable attendance and input to council meetings, we are constantly being bombarded with new time-consuming regulations and changes that take up much time.

We had a change of councillors as Peter Sapsed after spending all of his life (so far) in Anstey decided to move away to The Fens (sounds better than Chatteris) and I would like to formally thank Peter and the Sapsed family for all of his contributions to the village over the last 99 years. He will be sorely missed, not only on the Parish Council but on all the other areas in the village that he and Sue quietly and constantly assisted; the church, village fair, grass and hedge cutting for the village and many neighbours, hosting Christmas carols and much, much more. Peter was the last farmer to farm in the village and highlights the changes that we are facing with the huge change in village dynamics from agricultural and rural to purely residential, but I believe that most of us chose to live in Anstey because of its rural feel and as a Parish Councillor I, and I hope we, will attempt to keep it as close to that as possible.

Peter is replaced on The Parish Council by David House, who was born in the village and who farmed Anstey Bury for many years until moving to Puttock's End where he lives with his wife Charlotte and sons Harry and Ned. I welcome David and thank him for coming on board and hope he plays a long and active role on the Parish Council with his local knowledge, organisational and business skills.

Also, especially thanks to Caroline Jones, our Parish clerk for handling the ever-increasing workload and for the dedication and time she puts into making sure the Parish Council Meetings and its responsibilities run smoothly and efficiently.



Our gratitude also to our local police team who, when time permits attend our PC meetings, and otherwise sending updates on what police input and crime is occurring locally, which thankfully up to now is very little.

We would appear to be losing our local councillor for Braughing Ward, Ben Harris-Quinney and I look forward to welcoming a new face after the local elections. I would also like to thank Jeff Jones our County Councillor for all his assistance with Anstey Quarry, roads and other local issues. Peter Boylan was thanked for attending tonight's meeting.

This winter has been relatively mild and the roads not being too badly affected, we have at long last had some permanent repairs made to the roads throughout the village and some ditches dug out to assist with the drainage so fingers crossed "Quick fit" won't be making as much profit from us in future years other tyre companies are available!

We have had various planning applications to consider throughout the year with two permitted developments of agricultural building being changed to residential, one at Bandon's barn and one at The Grove, there was still a controversial application for change of use to commercial at The Hale, Glebe barn, which we opposed on grounds of incorrect measurements being registered by the applicant. Again, this was withdrawn, and is now being openly marketed which we await the outcome of that. High Trees is still on our list as there was a variation from original plans which was highlighted by a sharp-eyed neighbour and a retrospective application had to be submitted. We also have concerns over why the new entrance at Well Cottage was refused when a similar entrance was allowed at Cargreen Cottage and we are still seeking justification for the reasoning behind this decision.

At last, the Environment Agency and EHDC woke up to our constant outcry at the way Anstey Quarry were carrying on with the excessive lorry movements and questionable tipping and backfill practices and after various checks on backfill height and lorry counts, they went in and completed an enforced closure order on the site, which although a great outcome for us, is potentially a disaster for the owner, Hugh Kemsley. As Winters, the operators of the quarry, went into receivership and with various massive fines for other irregularities at their other sites around the county and look extremely unlikely to restore the quarry to the state required by the planning requirements. This means that the responsibility falls on the owner to reinstate the quarry to acceptable levels, which would be a massive financial burden, I have met with Hugh, along with Alastair and Mandy Parker – apparently he is still in discussions with the Environment Agency and EHDC who are very reserved about talking through the future options with him as there may be outstanding prosecutions pending. He suggests one way is to restart chalk operations to finance the reinstatement. I believe, however, that the best way forward is to attempt to make the quarry visually acceptable, safe and as far as the local community is concerned, lorry free. I will update you all on any further developments.

As most of you know last year we had a review of our conservation area when John Bosworth presented his draft plan at a village meeting in October, after various representations from villagers it was decided to produce our own plan on what we, as a village thought the conservation map should look like, which we then submitted to John Bosworth. The plan that we presented took the main conservation area from only being the centre of the village but to incorporate the outlying hamlets which we felt were so integral to the village make-up as we felt Anstey was a village of hamlets rather than a central area of a village. Our plan was not accepted as viable and the original draft was to be presented to executive committee without any consultation with us as a village, we questioned this and villager Justin Jewitt set up an online petition to show support for the village plan, which enabled us to make representation to the full council in Hertford, after which we received support from other councillors and is now being reconsidered with assurances to consult us in the decision making process, which now cannot continue until after the local council elections. I will therefore represent the views of the village at future meetings and keep you informed of the progress via the village diary and the Anstey Link.

The village Hall goes from strength to strength and we thank the committee for their time and energy in pushing the success of the village hall forward, as a village, through the Parish Council we contributed 50% of the costs of the double glazed new windows last year and are now looking at how we can possibly help with the car park as it is in



serious need of maintenance and hopefully we can help in this respect as well. We have also spoken to the school about a shared Broadband line into the village hall from the school, which The Parish Council would part finance.

We, as always thank David Moule for his time and vigilance in keeping our village tidy and monitoring the playing field equipment. We have unfortunately had a couple of vandalism problems in the playing fields with the wooden play bridge being damaged and one of the round bench sets being badly broken, both have now been repaired, but if we could keep an eye out when passing and let any of the parish council know if anything looks untoward.

Our thanks also go out again to the fair committee who help so much with raising additional and substantial funds for different aspects of the village and to Adrian and Alison Cossor for allowing their beautiful grounds to be taken over for the fair, which helps retain the village atmosphere and always attracts many visitors from near and far, in fact very far, as we had visitors from Japan, who for some reason contacted me early last year through my Anstey Grove Barn website asking if I knew of any local events as they were visiting Cambridge, I gave them details and contacts of Anstey Fair...and they turned up in hoards and appeared to have a lovely time, it certainly gave a different slant to the fair anyway.

We owe a special thanks to Jackie Ward who has donated to the village a defibrillator, this has been installed on the front of The Blind Fiddler and we also thank Barry for allowing this along with Mark Dry for completing the electrical installation for us. The Parish Council will be responsible for the maintenance of this and Dave Oxley is now the guardian of it.

I would also like to thank John and Patricia Hamilton for their continued production of the newsletter, Jackie Godfrey for the Anstey input and Stagestruck for the printing of the newsletter and all of those that help with its delivery.

Our thanks also go to Dave and Pauline Kellett for the village diary production and distribution, we also have a new kid on the block in the form of the Anstey Link, which although a similar concept to the village diary is a Google Group and allows an immediate contact, circulation point to all involved, where information about village events, items for sale, lost kittens etc. can be circulated in an instant without having to wait for Dave to return from hiking around Scotland to circulate..!!! It is suggested that we run both side by side for a while to see how effective the Anstey Link is and I would also like to thank Sarah Cruise for setting this up on our behalf.

Our thanks also go yet again to Paul Walton for the help doing our internal auditing which is much appreciated.

We on the Parish Council look forward to serving the villages' interests for the next year and are always open to any suggestions or ideas that anyone in the village may have to improve our living environment.

It was much sadness that our dear friend Anthony Pearce passed away recently, Anthony played a vital role over many years in most if not all aspects of the village, whether the Anstey Fair, Village Hall or Parish Council and I give thanks for his much appreciated contribution to the village and send Mary our love and best wishes and hope that she is happy in her new home.

Thank you.

Andrew Marchant *Chairman of Anstey Parish Council*

5. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The full financial reporting was distributed and accepted.

The main variation in expenditure is the defibrillator and village hall windows improvement costs.

6. VILLAGE HALL AGM REPORT

The hall continues to be used very regularly, almost on a daily basis, by various different groups in the community.



Anstey School now uses the hall every day in term time for the children's lunches, unless the hall is being hired out, which has made it much easier for the school to cope with their rising numbers. They also continue to use the hall for PE lessons, after school clubs and special events.

The Forever Active scheme, under which we set up exercise classes with the help of Sport England and East Herts Council, has now ended, but we continue to offer seven different classes during the week. During the three years of the scheme, all coach fees were paid by Forever Active, allowing us to save the income from participants, which we can now use to subsidise the classes. We expect that the capital we have accumulated will allow us to keep the classes going for several years.

Our Film and Social Club continues to be popular, with between 30 and 40 people normally attending the nine films we show a year (for the bargain price of £12!). After a request from members, we have recently trialed having subtitles for the films.

Other social and fundraising events we have held since last April include our annual Quiz (many thanks to Edward Burton for devising and running it), a Wine Tasting evening, a Race Night and a Christmas Dance. Events planned for the next few months include the 2019 Quiz, on April 27th, and a Barn Dance on September 28th. All welcome!

The hall is also hired privately for classes, rehearsals and parties etc.

Improvements made to the hall during the last year include installing double glazed windows and the front door – many thanks to the Parish Council for covering half the cost of this- and electrical work arising from the recommendations of the five-yearly inspection. We were not able to have vinyl laid on the floor as we'd hoped because we were advised that the existing floor contains linseed, which would make a vinyl covering lift up.

I am pleased to say that Sean Webb has kindly volunteered to keep the weeds down on the banks around the hall, now that Peter Sapsed has sadly left the village. The committee plan to plant some shrubs shortly in the raised bed to the right of the front door.

The next major improvement we would like to work on, in conjunction with the Parish Council, is to improve the main car park and lower drive, which as you know flood very badly during wet weather and get very muddy. They are used extensively not only by people visiting the hall, but also by parents and children at the school and by people attending the church for services, funerals and weddings etc., and we very much hope that substantial improvements can be made to this village facility, and are prepared to put some of the funds we raise towards the project.

The Village Hall Accounts were distributed and accepted.

We have opened a new current account this year with Barclays, to allow us to make BACs payments to exercise class coaches.

The Current Account balance includes £6065 ring-fenced for exercise classes, as agreed when we took part in the Forever Active programme; the savings account is kept in reserve for major emergencies such as re-roofing. Many thanks to Rod Hart for managing our finances and preparing the account sheet.

We are very grateful to the Anstey Fair Committee for their donation of £1350. Thanks again to the Parish Council for paying half the cost of the double glazing.

We received an additional grant from the Forever Active project, as it was wound up, of £605 to help maintain exercise classes.



We have recently joined a new fundraising initiative, the East Herts Community Lottery. Participants agree to pay a regular sum of £1 a week for a ticket, which can be paid annually or monthly; if the tickets are sold through our webpage, the hall gets 50% of the profits. We need to sell 20 tickets to be allowed to continue to benefit – so far we have sold 16. I hope very much that people in the hall this evening may feel they can support this initiative. There is a weekly draw, with £25000 prize money! If you would like to have a flutter and support the hall, please look at the hall page on the village website, where you will find a link to the community lottery. The Lottery Link is being included in the Anstey Newsletter to keep it in the forefront of people's minds.

7. Open Forum

There was a discussion about the origins of the village being lost. The Well was once called The Knoll and was still in use up to 1958, Barkway Road began being used when Two Acres Chicken Farm was changed into housing and was previously known as Paynes End Road, Little Thatch to the Woodman is Rayment Lane, the bridge by the B1368 is Starlings Bridge, and Snow End and Cheapside have disappeared on Google. We have had a road reclassification on Mill Lane which was the site of the old windmill. Footpaths signs are also pointing in the right direction – when this was queries with East Herts Council it was stated that it showed where footpaths start, not where they finish. There is a feeling that local names will be lost, along with the heritage of the village. It was agreed that there will be a co-ordinated effort to retain road names and Gus will provide a sign for Cheapside. In retaining our heritage, it will help to define the history of our village. Peter Boylan kindly reminded the Parish Council that any signs needed Highways Approval.

Ann Gosling formally thanked the Parish Council for their support to the heritage lottery fund grant application. Unfortunately, the PCC were not successful on this occasion and the framework is now closed. They are in discussions about new targets and looking at alternative grants and funds.

The War Memorial was discussed, it was agreed that keeping it clean and well maintained was important to the village. It appears to be fading and may require highlighting again. The steps also require reinstating. The lean was discussed last year – it is actually the installation into the ground which has caused a lean. Jenny Goymour and the Parish Council will look at Heritage Grants that may become available to commemorate the 100th Year in 2021.

School Parking was discussed – this was not collecting / drop off times but parking in general. There is a continuous line of cars parked from the school to St George's Church which allows no passing space before the corner. The Chairman reported that he had a meeting with the school where 'keep clear' signs were discussed. This is on-going. Although a mirror would be helpful, the Chairman reported that this had been disallowed by the local council. The Chairman is working with a landowner to improve the car park and provide more parking for the school and church. Jenny Goymour will discuss parking with the church to remind parishioners.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.15pm with refreshments.

Signed _____

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