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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ANSTEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL 2012 COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Andrew Marchant (Chairman)  
Mandy Parker (Vice chair) and secretary to village hall  
Jan Pledger  
Simon Bagnall  
Clive Hall

Others Present: Tony Pledger - Chairman of Village Hall  
Tom Sealy  
Peter Sapsed  
Ann Grimsdale  
Patricia Hamilton  
Anthony and Mary Pearce  
Steve Blackaby  
County Councillor Jane Pitman  
District Councillor Rose Cheswright

Officers present: Caroline Jones (Clerk)

**1. Welcome**

Cllr Marchant welcomed the parishioners and councillors.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Wylie and PCSO Amanda Higham – who provided a report that the Chairman read out :

*'From the date of the last meeting, 5<sup>th</sup> March, to today's date, there has been 1 recorded crime in Anstey. This was a theft of a mobile phone on 11<sup>th</sup> March.*

*I have put up x2 Hare coursing signs in the Village as requested by Cllr Marchant.  
My next beat surgery will be 21<sup>st</sup> April, 11.30-12pm and I will be outside the Church.*

*On the whole, the area remains quiet although, in other villages within the area, there has been an increase in thefts of home heating oil from tanks. I have sent out a few OWL messages with regard to this, including tank security.'*

**3. Minutes of the AGM held on 26 Monday 2010**

Chairman Marchant asked if all Councillors had seen the minutes from last year's meeting. The chairman requested any changes / comments, none received. The Chairman duly signed the minutes from the last meeting, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2011 as being a true record of the meeting.



#### 4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman read his Chairman's Report to those present at the meeting;

*Firstly I welcome you all to our annual Parish Council and village hall meeting. I would like to express my thanks to my fellow councillors for their valuable attendance and input to council meetings and also especially thank Caroline Jones our Parish clerk for the dedication and time she puts into making sure the Parish council meetings and its responsibilities run smoothly and efficiently. Also my thanks go to District Councillor Rosemary Cheswright for attendance to PC meetings and her advice and support, also to County Councillor Jane Pitman for her work on our behalf.*

*I hope the rest of the councillors share my view that the reason that I am happy to be on the Parish council is that our little village which derives its name from Hean (Anglo Saxon – high) and Stige (pathway) and was described by a Mr John Peile in the mid 19thC as "a place somewhat remote" and by Olive Cook in her 1970 publication to help prevent the 3<sup>rd</sup> London airport at Nuthampstead as "almost completely untouched by 20<sup>th</sup> C development" which I rather hope it remains, it is not a village in which we want to have street lights, cats eyes, parking restrictions, I would rather hope that in years to come the previous quotations are used again, remote, and untouched and like many generations before us villagers happily getting on with their lives, either within the friendship of their neighbours, The Church, The School, The Blind Fiddler or even on their own enjoying their peaceful bit of this glorious country in the various hamlets that make up Anstey.*

*It is important that whilst we may wish to remain "somewhat remote" that we as a community retain pride in our village and to this end the PC have been busy on your behalf over the last 12 months and I list just a few examples of work done:*

*The PC have recently recruited the services of a new litter picker, David Moule to replace Cathy Martin after she moved away to Buntingford, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cathy for her help and wish her well in Buntingford. Jan Pledger within the PC also arranged an additional spring litter pick which concentrates the villagers on the outer limits of the village and an intense litter pick within the village before the verges start to grow and cover the litter again! I would like to thank Jan for that. So when out with the dog, just pick up the crisp packet you see in the verge, it saves so much time later on!*

*There is constant monitoring and maintenance of the playing field equipment with welding and repairs being completed by myself and Alan Baker for which I would like to thank him.*

*We also have plans to increase the daffodil population within the village and to that end any daffodil donations would be kindly accepted by The Hilliers who have volunteered to organise this.*

*The Parish clerk and myself have taken much time in investigating the pothole situation by logging, reporting and finally meeting with the highways department of East Herts to establish why repairs are not being carried out as they have in the past, obviously there is less cash to carry out long term and permanent repairs, but having made our point I am glad to say that many of the worse potholes have been repaired with the promise that some of the most badly affected areas will receive some more permanent repairs later in the year, some which we may need to seek extra funding for from Councillor Jane Pitman funds.*

*We were aware of historic problems with the Bishops Stortford bus which in the past we were told didn't allow enough time in the town, so after consultation with the council and the bus company we managed to get some extra time in Stortford for those visiting.*



*As with previous years the PC is happy to financially assist in the maintenance of St George's and The Chapels churchyards, although this year we had to ask that we give a lesser amount as our resources are limited and under pressure and we didn't feel an increase in the precept was appropriate in the current difficult times.*

*There have been some new planning applications within (and outside) the village where the PC has given its views on whether we felt the developments appropriate or not, there was opposition to wind turbines at Barkway golf club with other applications for garage developments, house extensions being supported whilst solar panels and a new bund at Nuthampstead shooting ground were not opposed.*

*The PC representatives have attended numerous meetings to discuss the changes to planning and how the change in County Plans will affect us, at present the greatest local threat of development being in Buntingford, which we are monitoring.*

*We maintain a good working relationship with our PCSO Amanda Higham and regularly attend meetings to discuss local police and crime concerns.*

*It is also our intention to have an Anstey website where village matters can be stored and retrieved, whether details on the village fair, church, chapel or school or a file with the village history in it which can be accessed and added to as time goes by, there are many different pieces of local history that are held around the village and if we can bring them all together I believe it could form a valuable village resource for now and into the future, if there is anyone interested in assisting Stephen Wylie in this project please come forward!*

*If any villagers wish to assist with Parish council matters or wishes to join the parish council in the future please contact Caroline Jones our Parish clerk.*

*Within the village there are some further thanks to record, Adrian and Alison Cosser for their continual hosting of Anstey fair and all the Fair committee for their hard work in raising funds for the different groups in the village, John and Patricia for the newsletter editing, Simon and Liz Bagnall for the help with Newsletter production and the other village assistance that they give so freely and generously and Mike Thompson for his assistance in auditing the PC accounts*

*On a final note I would like to voice the gratitude that we owe Sir Roger and Lady Du'Boulay for their relentless and tireless hard work that they have put in for the village fair and St George's church, as a village their contribution is greatly appreciated and I am sure we all wish them well in their move to pastures and gardens new and I would like to suggest that a Jubilee Oak tree is planted in the village and called The Du'Boulay Jubilee oak which we will discuss at the next PC meeting.*

*As far as I am aware all current councillors including myself intend continuing into the next 12 months and look forward to keeping our village a safe and pleasant place for us all to live in.*

## **5. 2011-12 Statement of Accounts**

The Chairman presented the figures and explained that they were much the same expenditure as the previous year, grass cutting being the largest expenditure. The clerk passed the Statement of Accounts to parishioners. Cllr Parker asked what the BDO payment was which was the external audit. There were no other questions and the audit papers were duly signed.



## 6. Village Hall AGM Report

Tony Pledger passed a report to the clerk. He introduced himself as the chairman of the village hall, Tom Sealy handles bookings, Nick Kirkpatrick can't be at the meeting (Treasurer) and Mandy is Vice Chair.

***Please refer to Chairman Part 1 Open Village Hall Meeting Notes & Treasurers Report***

### Questions and Discussions:

Parishioner Mary Pearce asked if Tony Pledger had noticed the drive was breaking up and asked if he was happy with it. Tony explained due to the nature of the resurfacing some surface break up was usual. She also asked if other groups may use the hall now that the preschool aren't using it and if the drawings and pictures were no longer displayed would make any difference to bookings. Tony Pledger explained that the facility was available to the village for the neighbourhood watch, polling and village usage. The hall had its strengths; locals can use their local facility and its weaknesses; no elevated stage, kitchen size is for small scale gatherings. The locality offered a good mix of halls provides different facilities. Tony Pledger asked for any ideas for improvement. This would also be asked via the newsletter.

DC Cheswright asked if there was any other meetings; agricultural etc., flower, vegetable that could be held at the hall. Cllr Pledger mentioned she couldn't book the hall for a forthcoming plant sale. At Braughing they have jam, cooking and flower competitions – using the village hall.

With the school using the hall less, County Cllr Pitman spoke about the school community room that she had recently viewed.

## 7. Open Forum

Parishioner Peter Sapsed asked for information on the Blind Fiddler planning application. Chairman Marchant explained the Blind Fiddler had put in a planning application to change the 3 bed and breakfast units to residential to give the Public House financial support. The Parish Council held a planning meeting last week and supported the change of use to retain a pub in the village. The landlords are hoping that by selling off the B&B it will aid them financially and the council supported them in retaining a public house in the village.

Parishioner Ann Grimsdale asked where the Oak Tree will be planted with Sir and Lady Du'Boulay moving out of the village. The Chairman hasn't decided where to put the oak yet but it could go where the Elm fell. Mary Pearce confirmed she thought it was a lovely idea. Mary also asked what help Mandy needed for the Jubilee. The chairman confirmed that a meeting would be held later this week and ideas would be gratefully received – Mary Pearce remembered bunting being made in previous celebrations and there was a Festival Queen from Meesden on the back of a tractor. Patricia Hamilton remembered the pub being involved before and she spent 5hrs washing up!! The Chairman announced that a short lunch time celebration where neighbours can see each other would be a nice idea with a few stalls and games. The nearest beacon is planned at Therfield or Hormead. Stocks and water bombs were being organised for Tuesday – day of the Jubilee.

The chairman asked for any other comments, County Councillor Pitman spoke about potholes and road surfaces. Parishioner Anthony Pearce was concerned about blocked gullies in the village, and in particular outside Silkmead which was flooding with recent rainfall. Gullies were cleared a few years ago when Mel Brewer was Chairman. County Councillor Pitman suggested the parish council speak to Highways and request clearing.



There was a discussion on the size of the Quarry, the chalk pile was getting noticeably bigger.

Flint Hall's tree planting had been carried out, planting and a fence was outstanding from a planning application with the previous manager at Cokenach. The new Estate Manager had arranged planting in accordance with the works required.

Parishioner Patricia Hamilton asked about the strip of land that had been carting on it last year. Chairman Marchant confirmed that Q-Pod Buggies were used once a year where 5/6 visitors camped overnight. The land had been offered for use during the Jubilee and the Fair.

There being no further questions or comments, the chairman closed the meeting at 8.20pm with refreshments.

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_