



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
ANSTEY VILLAGE HALL
15 MAY 2023 AT 7.00PM**

Present: Andrew Marchant
Simon Bagnall
David House
David Oxley
Amanda Parker
Jan Pledger

Apologies: CC Jeff Jones
DC Geoffrey Williamson
PC De Bruyn

Members of the Public: Stuart Bonnet
Jenny and Gus Goymour
Rod Hart
Kate Oxley
Tony Pledger
Marissa Zoppellini

District/ County Councillor: None

Officer present: Caroline Jones (Clerk)

The chairman warmly welcomed councillors and the members of the public to the AGM Meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from County Councillor Jeff Jones, District Councillor Geoffrey Williamson and PC Leon De Bruyn.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST None Received.

3. MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEEING HELD ON 09 May 2022

The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting held on 09 May 2022.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2022-23

Firstly, thank you for attending and I welcome you all to our 2023 annual Parish meeting. I would like to express my thanks to my fellow councillors for their regular attendance and input to council meetings, I believe we have a good cross section of skills and experience on the PC who all make valuable contributions to our Parish Council meetings which I again thank them for.

Also, I especially thank Caroline Jones our Parish clerk for the dedication and time she puts into making sure the Parish council meetings and its financial and regulatory responsibilities run smoothly and efficiently, even her move from Hare St to Hertford didn't interfere with her total commitment to our Parish Council.

As you may be aware, Anstey has recently been removed from the Braughing ward and now included into Little Hadham & The Pelhams ward and I congratulate Geoffrey Williamson on recently being elected as our new District Councillor in this ward and look forward to working with him over the coming years. We thank County Councillor Jeff Jones for his help over many years and look forward to continuing to work with him in the future.



Our gratitude also to our local police team who, when time permits attend our PC meetings otherwise sending us updates with a monthly local crime report which thankfully Anstey doesn't feature in too often.

I have over the last year attended the Rural Neighbourhood Police Priorities Meetings where Parish council representatives meet with the local police team to discuss where they should be prioritising their efforts, obviously rural crime was highlighted, but it was emphasised that all policing was dictated by statistics and if the rural areas didn't figure in "bad" statistics then other areas would be prioritised, i.e. town centres where there were more "reported" crimes, so it is imperative that any crimes, or concerns of potential crimes are reported so we can get proportionate policing.

We have had a few planning applications to consider throughout the year, but these have been fairly straight forward with being mainly extensions and refurbishments, we are still suffering from bad service from the enforcement team who appear to be some years behind chasing up any reported breaches in planning consents. I would however highlight the importance for applicants to liaise with neighbours to ensure that any concerns or potential objections are considered prior to making a planning application as this may save any expensive altering and resubmissions of plans, which can be very costly in this day and age.

You may have noticed that the trees along the brook in the playing fields have been cut right back to give us some of the play area back, this along with the new football goals hopefully give the local children somewhere to use their excess energy, although it has been difficult to keep the grass cut early this year as it has been too wet to get the machine on the playing field without causing too much damage.

We, as always thank David Moule for his time and vigilance in keeping our village tidy and monitoring the playing field equipment, unfortunately one of the never ending cutbacks being made by East Herts Council is the axing of the litter picking grant, which means that we either put up our precept to cover the existing cost or possibly rely on villagers to be responsible for lengths of road to keep clear of litter, this being highlighted when the unnecessary, badly planned and badly executed works when the verge drains were dug out recently and causing litter that had laid inaccessible in the undergrowth to be freed to blow around, suddenly we had volunteers clearing it all up, so there may be some merit in using volunteers, we will make a decision shortly within the PC and keep you informed.

Our thanks also go out to the fair committee who help so much with raising additional and substantial funds for different aspects of the village and our thanks especially this year to Adrian and Alison Cossor for allowing their beautiful grounds to be taken over for the fair for so many years, they have however decided understandably, to pass the baton for another venue, there have been a few, when in the late '70s Roger Tamplin the vicar at the time reinstated the fair which historically was held along Cheapside, we've since held it at The School, Bandons, High Hall, Essex Cottage, Anstey Hall, Anstey House(now The Old Vicarage)for many years, then up to Anstey Bury and we wish the committee luck in finding a suitable venue for next year.

I would also like to thank again Dave Oxley for his fine editing and production of the village newsletter, the original funding via Jeff Jones's locality grant for the preferable printed copy has now finished and so with the Local Parish Councils and some much needed advertising revenue, Dave has managed to continue its production, but further advertising revenue is much required so please any local businesses or contacts anyone may have would be gratefully received.

Andrew Hodson has for the last 2 years been our external auditor for the Parish Council, balancing our accounts and making sure that all is in order with our legal and financial responsibilities.



Fortunately with our fantastic Clerk, Caroline all our figures etc tally, but nevertheless we thank Andrew whole heartedly for helping out and signing us off for another year.

Our gratitude goes out to the village hall committee for their superb reinvigoration of the village hall in the social calendar of the village, with the film nights, quiz nights, fitness classes and shindigs extra funds from covid related grants have enabled an extensive reinvestment program which I'm sure Kate will run through, but many thanks to all the committee for their hard work.

I do also feel we should acknowledge another great asset we have within our village which, like the church and village hall brings the community together and to that end I would like to thank Barry and Emma at The Blind Fiddler (it's still The Chequers to me..!!) for their fantastic all welcoming hosting of a truly fantastic local pub, I'm sorry there wasn't any local funding to help with the coronation celebrations, but by all accounts it was a superb day and thank you and your staff from the village.

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 help improve our living environment.

Thank you.

Andrew Marchant
Chairman of Anstey Parish Council

5. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Payments and credits to/from the Village Hall were explained.

It was noted that the Village Hall Community Donation should be transferred to the Capital Reserves Account. The AGM Statement of Accounts were accepted and approved, copies of which will be uploaded to the Anstey Village Website in due course.

6. VILLAGE HALL AGM REPORT

Prepared accounts were issued at the meeting.

Many thanks to Rod Hart for providing the accounts, and for all his work as treasurer.

Activity at the Village Hall has now more or less returned to pre-pandemic levels.

In November the 40th anniversary of the opening of the hall was celebrated by a music evening which was well attended and enjoyed by all.

On April 1st we held our annual Village Quiz, which again attracted a large number of keen contestants. Much fun was had, and a sizeable sum was raised to support the running of the hall. On April 2nd, the Hall hosted a Ukrainian Folk Festival, organised by local Ukrainian refugees, helped out by committee members and other villagers – many thanks for all the support. There was a huge turnout of well over a hundred people, and our Ukrainian friends shared their music, dance and craft traditions which was a very positive, interesting and enjoyable experience for all. The event raised over £1500 for medical aid for Ukraine.

Film Nights have continued to be popular, with a wide range of films shown and an average audience of about 30 villagers.

There have also been a number of private bookings of the hall for a various different functions. Many thanks to all those who have supported village hall events during the year.



Quite a few **improvements** have been made to the hall during the year:

- The toilet windows have been replaced to match those in the rest of the building and improve insulation.
- New flooring had been installed in the kitchen, bar, corridor and toilets. This was kindly funded by a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.
- The car park has been improved and extended – many thanks to Andrew Marchant for his role in organising this.
- The old heaters unexpectedly failed in the middle of the winter, and have been replaced by a more effective, reliable and quiet system.

In addition, £1000 was donated to the Parish Council for improvements to the playing field. Much of the money to pay for these improvements came from grants, especially those related to post-Covid recovery. I would like to thank the Parish Council for their help in organising payments for the improvements. Our bank balance remains healthy, and we currently have no further major capital expenditure projects planned.

Kate Oxley, Chair of Village Hall Committee. May 2023

7. Open Forum

Water constantly collecting and pooling at the **Well/ Phone Kiosk** was discussed.

This could be due to drains and ditches that were previously present in the village.

It was noted that a large proportion of the ditches were now non-operational.

Requests for Highways to act have received no responses, together with the request of any village culvert / drainage maps.

Cave Gate and Silkmead flooding was also discussed. The disappointment that no action is taken by Highways was noted.

Recent **ditch clearing** undertaken in the village has historically never been carried out before (in 40 years) and will be discussed further at the Parish Council meeting this evening.

New playing field equipment was discussed. Previously, a grant was applied for but not successful. The last successful grant received was for the skateboard ramp. Any new grant applications must be match-funded. The cost of a roundabout for younger children is approximately £6,000 and will be considered when East Herts grant applications next open.

The **Quarry** was discussed, any reinstatement / action is awaited following a court case to be arranged.

It was agreed that bringing the levels back to the original height was the intention at the planning application stage.

It was suggested that making a green wildlife environment with safe edges and the planting of trees would be acceptable.

Moatside Bungalows were discussed, the Chairman reported that a copy of the covenant was received – unfortunately there is no covenant from Hubert to states that the bungalows must remain as social housing. It therefore allows the current owner, Clarion Homes to sell the properties. The only covenant was that owners had responsibility for drainage.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Signed _____

Date: _____ (Page 4 of 4)