



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ANSTEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY, 24TH APRIL 2016 COMMENCING AT 8 PM

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

County Councillor: Rose Cheswright

Village Hall Committee: Kate Oxley – Chairman of Village Hall Committee
Rod Hart – Treasurer of Village Hall Committee

Others Present: Rod Godfrey
Ken Emberson
Jenny and Gus Goymour
John Hamilton
Patricia Hamilton
Tony Pledger

Officer present: Caroline Jones (Clerk)

The Chairman welcomed attendees to the 2017 Annual Parish Meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence – Cllr Peter Sapsed who had been unavoidably called away.

2. Declarations of Interest – none received.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on Monday 18th April 2016

Minutes from the last meeting were provided and the Chairman requested any changes or comments, none received. The Chairman duly signed the minutes from the last meeting, 18th April 2016 as being a true record of the meeting.

4. Chairman's Report the Chairman read his Report to those present at the meeting for 2016-17.

Firstly, thank you for attending and I welcome you all to our 2017 annual Parish meeting.

I would like to express my thanks to my fellow councillors for their valuable attendance and input to council meetings, I believe we have a good cross section of skills and experience on the PC from Jan and Peter, both locals from village backgrounds to more recent additions of quite a few decades in the form of Mandy, Simon and myself and our "newbie" Dave, who reminds us that after well over a decade in the village is himself almost a local himself ..!!!

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 responsibilities run smoothly and efficiently. As always one of our major local concerns is the unprecedented residential growth of Buntingford and how it will affect the lives of us here in Anstey. We are keeping a constant eye on what we need to do to keep up with the requirements to protect us from excessive development and monitor the county plan and any changes in legislation and act accordingly.



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

As we all know the reduction in available funds to maintain the road network nationwide has been apparent locally with the most dangerous area in Anstey being the water eruption from Snow End with its subsequent freezing and flooding, well I can report that after a many years of constant reporting, lobbying and threatening it has finally been repaired well we hope it has been .. As we have not had any significant rainfall since the repairs in early March we don't know how effective the repairs were, so watch this space... Other smaller patching appears to be carried out relatively quickly, so if you are aware of any potholes appearing please report on the highways page ASAP .. or let the PC know and we will do it on your behalf.

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, with one larger barn development on the quarry road being surprisingly refused change of use.

We still have an amount of capital in reserve from the NHB of over £12,000 which, as this capital cannot be used for the day to day running of the PCs activities. We will keep this in reserve for any capital purchases required by the village in the future.

We made a grant application this year to add a new kiddies roundabout to the playing fields, but the grant application was unsuccessful due to us receiving the grant the previous year for the skate ramp, so we will most likely try again next financial year.

Those who walk through the village may also have noticed the new sign on the playing field gate, after researching the deeds for the playing fields when we considered putting them into trust (which we decided against) we discovered the original name for the land bequeathed to the village was called The Folly, and so we thought we should resurrect this name and in association with commemorating and remembering the sacrifice of villagers in the First World War, we rename the playing fields "The Folly, Centenary Park".

You may also have noticed in your council tax demand that we have requested and will receive an increase in the precept that we are allocated. This was due to the fact that historically Anstey First School requested the County Council cut the grass in our playing fields which was carried out at no direct cost to the school and this suited all. Now the School is expected to pay for such outputs out of their own limited budget and, as the playing field is a village asset it didn't seem fair for the school to carry on paying for this so, the PC/village have resumed responsibility for this duty. We went out and got three quotes for cutting the grass with the most competitive T&P Sapsed to do this, and I thank Peter for doing this so competitively. We have also reinstated the costs for cutting the grass at St George's as the PCC informed us that they have limited funds for the repair to the fabric of the church building and were becoming very stretched and as this fabulous building is the centrepiece of our village we felt that we should help the situation where possible, so these two instances have required an increase in the precept which we regret, but do feel were unavoidable.

We, as always thank David Moule for his time and vigilance in keeping our village tidy and monitoring the playing field equipment.

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 to Adrian and Alison Cossor for allowing their beautiful grounds to be taken over for the fair.

I would also like to thank John and Patricia Hamilton for their continued running of the newsletter, Stagestruck for the printing of the newsletter and all of those that help with the gathering of information and its delivery. Our thanks also go to Ian Jennings for his village diary production and distribution.



Mike Thompson who has been our internal auditor has now moved away, I would like to wish him the best and thank Mike for all his help in the past and would like to welcome Paul Walton into village life and thank him for accepting responsibility for completing this auditing task this year and hopefully future years.

And lastly, but not least, 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 shin digs also well done to the village players for the panto which by all accounts went down very well who needs the West End and Cambridge with all of this going on locally..???

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.

*Thank you. **Andrew Marchant – Chairman of Anstey Parish Council***

5. 2016-17 Statement of Accounts

A copy of the accounts were available to parishioners which was self-explanatory.

6. Village Hall Committee Report to Annual Parish Meeting April 24th 2017

The Chairman read the Report to those present at the meeting.

I would like to begin by thanking the village hall committee for all their hard work over the year, the Anstey Fair Committee for their generous grant last July, East Herts District Council for the support they have given us during the year, both financially and in other ways, and most importantly, all those who have come to the hall to support the events and activities on offer.

Developments 2016-17

*The committee have focussed on two main initiatives during the year since my last report. Firstly, in partnership with East Herts District Council and Sport England, we have set up five '**Forever Active**' exercise classes: Pilates, table tennis, two sessions of yoga and, most recently, Zumba. The classes, which began in July, are primarily aimed at improving the health and fitness of the over 50s, but younger people are also welcome. Quite a large number of people from Anstey and other local villages have signed up to the classes, with average attendance at each session of around 8 to 10 people, though our record was 19 for Pilates, which was a bit of a squash! Thanks to the subsidy from Sport England, the classes cost only £2 a session, after the initial free one. We have set up a separate account for this money, because the financial support from Sport England will be gradually reduced over the next two years, and the idea is that we use the moneys collected so far to continue to subsidise the cost of coaches for the classes once external funding ends. The Forever Active organisers have also provided us with three excellent table tennis tables, as well as bats and balls, with mats for Yoga and Pilates, and with publicity materials.*

*The second main initiative this year has been the **pop up film and social club**, which began in October. We have so far shown 5 films and signed up about 70 members at £12 a year, with average attendance of about 40, and people seem to enjoy the evenings which include a licensed bar and snacks and an opportunity to catch up with friends as well as watch the film.*

Improvements

As you can see, we have bought upholstered chairs, thanks to a £2000 grant from EHDC, and we have also improved the kitchen by buying a second fridge and a hot water urn, bought some smaller tables and put up a noticeboard in the foyer, thanks to the grant from Anstey Fair. Any village organisations are welcome to use the noticeboard to advertise events etc. We have also had a major clear out of the loft and now store most of the old plastic chairs up there.



Use of the Hall

The hall continues to be used regularly by the school, and intermittently by playgroup, messy church and boot camp. It is occasionally hired out by private individuals too. As well as the Forever Active classes, there is a weekly table tennis club on Tuesday evenings, and a carpet bowls club on Wednesday evenings in the autumn and winter.

During the last year, the committee have organised a number of fundraising events, including a summer music evening here, a classical concert kindly hosted by the church and the Christmas dance – half of the proceeds of the latter were given to the school minibus fund.

Future Plans

As well as the ongoing pop-up film and social club, and the Forever Active classes, we are holding a Village Quiz on Saturday May 6th (many thanks in advance to Edward Burton, our quizmaster) and a Summer Music Evening on July 22nd. We also plan to host a First Aid course in the autumn. In terms of improvements to the hall, we are investigating ways to improve the heat efficiency and insulation of the building, as it can still be rather cold in the winter, especially at floor level, despite the new heaters.

Accounts

Our treasurer, Rod Hart, has kindly prepared the accounts, copies of which have been distributed around the hall. As you can see, our income was lower this year than last, because in 2015 – 16 we received a £3873 rebate from the electricity company which had been overcharging the hall for years.

Income and expenditure during 2016-17 roughly balance, though the income includes the £1766 Forever Active money, which is, as I mentioned earlier, in a dedicated account to subsidise those classes in the future. Please feel free to ask any questions about the accounts or other matters.

Kate Oxley – Chairman of Anstey Village Hall Committee

7. Open Forum – Public Session

Capital funds and expenditure were discussed. The Chairman asked if anyone had any ideas on how it should be used. Questions raised were:-

1. *Are there any regulations as to how the money is spent?*

The Chairman explained that the capital expenditure was for village infrastructure and however it is spent, it should be allotted to something available to all in the village.

2. *Could the money be used for the village hall?*

There was no reason not to, the money cannot be used for running costs of the Parish Council. Buntingford will use the majority of its capital grant for play areas and public spaces.

The Village Hall Chairman advised that a surveyor had confirmed the hall needed double glazing and they were looking to apply for a grant. If they are unable, and as the hall is a village resource, it could benefit from the NHB grants.

The flooring was discussed. It was agreed that insulating the floor would not help the loss of heat 2ft from the floor. It was agreed that floor insulation would help those attending exercise classes, it was very cold on the floor in winter.

It is likely that there was no cavity wall insulation which didn't help the situation.

3. *When does it need to be used by?*

There is no deadline.



4. *Can the village be consulted on how the money should be spent?*

It was suggested that information was included in the next newsletter. The Chairman confirmed that the village had been consulted in the past and would be in the future via the newsletter.

5. *Do Anstey Quarry have restrictions?*

There has been an increase of lorries, as many as six travelling together.

There is a restriction of 60 loads per day to Anstey Quarry. There had been an increase of lorry movements for the work on a new bund being carried out at the Shooting Ground at Nuthampstead. It was difficult to ascertain which location the lorries were travelling to. Hare Street have been vigilant on checking the number of lorries loading in and out of Anstey Quarry.

The Chairman suggested that any concerns on the Quarry are escalated to the Parish Council.

Broadband was discussed. Gigaclear had been impossible to contact for progress. They've disappeared, and BT have improved the service to the village. We have a fibre to the box now – it's a much-improved service. Gigaclear only got to 30% of their sign up.

As there were no further items, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and subsequently closed it at 8.55 pm.

Signed _____

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