Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council – Wednesday 1st June 2022

Present;
Councillors: Cllr Jeans, Cllr Greer, Cllr Page, Cllr Lock; Cllr Gaskin
Also present C Holmes; Cllr Lock; 4 Parishioners

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Price; Cllr White; Cllr Hall; Cllr Thompstone

1. **Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 1st May 2019**

All agreed to be a true record of the meeting
Action; Clerk to convert to upload to website

1. **Matters arising from those minutes**

None

1. **Chairman’s Report**

Welcome Cllr’s & Parishioners. This is the Chairmans Report for 21/22 and I am Russell Jeans, the Chair of Parish Council.

This year saw several changes to the Anslow Parish Council, herein known as the APC, not least a change in Clerk and the appointment of a new Chair.

2021 saw the retirement of our longstanding Clerk, Judy Tjon Soei Len. After years of dedicated service, Judy decided it was time to pass the baton on, and I wish to record our thanks once again, formally for her selfless service to the Village and its Parishioners.

Following a well-publicised and successful recruitment process, we were delighted to have recruited Charlotte Holmes as our new Clerk. Charlotte brings vast experience to the role being also the Clerk for Hanbury and Newborough. Her wider experience of other Parishes is helping us create synergy and cooperation across our local area, with many of the problems we face being of a collective nature and impact.

In addition to a change in Clerk, we had a change in Chair. After countless years of dedicated service, support and hard-work, Frank Thompstone stepped down at the AGM in May 21. David Page remained as Vice Chairman, and I stepped forward to assume the reins for two years.

We also welcomed Chris Price to the Parish Council, which in addition to the Chair and Vice Chair now comprises of Cllr Anne Greer, Cllr Paul Joyce, Cllr Laura Hall & Cllr Frank Thompstone.

I also wish to record our thanks for the background support regular attendance we receive from Cllr Philip White, Cllr Simon Gaskin and Cllr Russell Lock.

20/21 and 21/22 has not been easy for anyone. Restrictions on gatherings, freedom of movement, anxieties and isolation and much sadness overshadowed the village of Anslow. On a positive side however, many like myself, having spent two decades living in the Village, suddenly discovered the hidden pathways and bridle paths that Criss cross the area; realising how interesting and beautiful Anslow was.

People spoke to each other, albeit at a distance, as many were mobilised through necessity, to take exercise and ‘keep it local’. The roads quietened down, and people were out and about talking to each other enjoying the pathways and bridleways.

During the restrictions, meetings of the APC went online, and our regular business continued via Zoom. Whilst efficient in terms of getting business done and making attendance easier, nothing replaces meeting in the Village Hall; and we are glad to back to normal.

Despite the pandemic however, the key and ongoing theme of the APC alongside its regular business of paths, hedges and allotments, has been its focus on alleviating the road traffic problem in the Village. We suffer on all sides with the volume, weight, and speed of vehicles.

We suffer from being a ‘rat run’ which will continue to worsen as more developments are completed. Evidence from the Parishes’ Speed Indication Camera has clocked cars travelling down Hopley Road at 90mph on occasion, some 60 miles per above the speed limit.

This adds to the body of evidence which when combined with the hard-work and lobbying of the APC over the last few years, and an excellent relationship developed with Staffordshire County Council, has finally led to an array of traffic measures to be announced in July 22.

This will include enforceable mitigation around weight, speed, and traffic at key points in the village. This is a substantial and complex capital investment from Staffordshire County Council into Anslow and Villagers will be invited to a presentation in the Village Hall on 8th July. Staffordshire County Council will of course ensure that all required legal consultation processes will take place.

In addition to this important body of work, keeping the village pathways and byways accessible has been important ongoing work. I wish to especially thank Ray Curren and his tireless group of volunteers for allowing us to achieve this. In addition, special thanks also go to the group of dedicated volunteer litter pickers who have the thankless task of removing other people’s rubbish from our pathways and hedges.

21/22 has also seen an ongoing focus on improving the Allotments area. This is a great resource for the village, and we welcome new enquiries from potential tenants.

My final thoughts are please be reassured, that despite the limited resources we are working with, we are making progress in making the village a safer and more peaceful community for us all to live in. Please don’t be reluctant to raise issues of concern with us as a body or individually

1. **Annual Accounts: Unaudited balance sheet**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Opening Cash Book Position | **£12107.45** |  |  |
| Total Income 2020/21 | **£10630.66** |  |  |
| Total Expenditure 2020/21 (including VAT) | **£ 8990.39**  |  |  |
| **Current Cash Book Position** | **£13747.72** |  |  |

**Lloyds Bank Statements**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Treasurer Account (Current)A/c No 00198773 |  |  |
|  **£13747.72** |  |

**Total Bank Funds £13747.72**

**Total Unpresented cheques up to 31.3.2021 £ 0.00**

**Payments awaiting authorisation at 31st March meeting £ 0.00**

**Unpresented Income up to 31.3.2021 £ 0.00**

**Banking Position as at 31.3.2021 £13747.72***(Total Bank Funds minus Total Unpresented chqs/Payments awaiting authorisation plus Unpresented Income/cash)*

**2020/21 Vat Total** to date, to be reclaimed in 2021 = **£159.20**

**Income**:

Precept was increased for the year 2021/2022 from 2020/2021 by 4.99%

No increase was made to the allotment rents for this year but this may be something that will be under review at the end of 2022.

No grants were received for any projects currently being undertaken but the funds for the ETRO and traffic calming projects is still reserved until the final costings are set.

**Expenditure**:

A slight decrease in the clerk’s salary of 6% from 2020/2021 and a further decrease of 6% in other payments. This is partly to do with the small period between clerks as well as reduced costs on both stationery and village maintenance.

Budget for 2022/2023 will now be managed with a traffic light system allowing the budget for this financial year to be monitored on a bi-monthly basis for further review.

1. **Receive Borough and County Councillors reports**

**Cllr Philip White**

The last twelve months have as always been a very busy time for the County Council including elections last May which saw me returned for a second term as your county councillor.

The core work of the council (accounting for two-thirds of the council’s spending) protecting vulnerable children, vulnerable adults and elderly people in care continues to be delivered to a high standard in Staffordshire something reinforced by recent visits by OFSTED to assess some of our services. The cost of care continues to rise due to inflationary pressures and the growing size of the population requiring these services due to increased life expectancy, but we continue to manage this effectively.

The last twelve months have also seen the County Council as the public health authority for Staffordshire continuing to deal with the impact of COVID-19 as we have unwound restrictions on people’s everyday lives whilst also making sure that measures remain in place to keep people safe. At the same time, our business support teams have helped hundreds of businesses and thousands of employees meaning Staffordshire continues to have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the Midlands.

I am pleased that the County Council working in partnership with the Parish Council will be brining forward a scheme over the course of this year to improve road safety in Anslow focused on reducing speeding and the number of HGVs using local roads. This is an excellent example of a parish working positively with another council and hopefully the benefits for local people will be seen on the ground over the next twelve months.

**Cllr Simon Gaskin**

Cllr Gaskin discussed the traffic and dust from the Beam Hill development and explained that further road sweeping has been requested and subsequently undertaken. This will continue to be monitored going forward.

The green footpath was discussed with a request having gone to SCC to ensure that this completed but it will be continued to be chased to make the walkway safe.

Cllr Gaskin explained that some increased antisocial behaviour in the wooded area on Longhedge Lane has been reported recently and is currently under review with the local police

Cllr Gaskin voiced his support of the upcoming traffic calming projects within the village.

**Cllr Russell Lock**

Thanks went to Cllr Gaskin for covering the salient points. Cllr Lock went on shared information on the upcoming prosperity fund which will hopefully be able to be accessed by some of the smaller communities. It was discussed that this fund could be used for a heritage trail project with good ideas being considered from Parish Councils should Anslow wish to submit something.

1. **Reports from village organisations**

**Holy Trinity Church – Read by Barry Snaith**

This year has again been disrupted by the pandemic and it has been very difficult for everybody but we have all rallied round and supported each other and we as a congregation would like to thank Phyllis, Dave Robbins, David Boosie and Carol Webster for the wonderful job they have done in maintaining morale in such difficult times.

Church Services were cancelled during January, February and March and reopened on 25 April but Phyllis and Chris did a sterling job in organising online services.

The damp problems continue in Church but we hope that we will be able to start to rectify this soon. Robert Kilgour came to do the Quinquennial Report and the PCC must now study his findings and hopefully be able to take action if funds allow. we have had a few problems with such things as plumbing, and leaking drains which have been done but it has been a drain on our resources, this along with the normal outgoings has been a very difficult time.

We sent a letter of condolence to Her Majesty the Queen on the death of The Duke of Edinburgh.

Due to the pandemic nearly all the fund raising events had to be cancelled except for the Anslow Village Fete which was held at Riddings Farm. A big vote of thanks must go to all those who organised this at short notice. This was Holy Trinity at its best and we raised £9105.52 which has kept us going and we were thrilled by the support we got from the village. The Christmas Market which is an Annual event which raised £1518.40 and again well done to everybody involved.

We have such willing volunteers who keep the church running and special mention must go to Ann and Mac Lowe who keep the Churchyard , it is always a picture and although I am biased I think it is the best in the area.

Thankyou to our wonderful congregation, we are a family albeit a small one but we are totally committed to Holy Trinity, lets hope that everything will be back to normal soon.

Our hope for the future is that the Church can grow, especially by attracting youngsters, we can all stay safe and the future of our wonderful church can be maintained and we can go from strength to strength.

If you feel that you can help in this Quest even if you don't attend Holy Trinity you could become A Friend Of Holy Trinity by donating an annual sum the details which you can get from Ann Lowe on 812428.

If you would like to come and see us you will be most welcome.

**Anslow Village Hall – Sent in by Amanda McGreal**

**Introduction**

The village hall continues to be a centre for fitness and wellbeing classes, mornings, afternoons and evenings, as well as the WI, Anslow gardening society and Holy Trinity Church fund raising events. Some classes left the hall during Covid and new ones have been welcomed including 2 regular U3A monthly classes, mother and baby yoga and martial arts. The hall has 14 weekly and 4 regular monthly bookings. Karate classes returned in April and all other classes returned in July 2021.

**Committee and booking fees**

We were delighted to welcome Liz Staples to the committee last year; she has taken over the role of Treasurer following a long stint of Treasurer by Anne Greer. Unfortunately, our current Chairperson, Bridget Ainger has given notification of her intention to resign as soon as a replacement can be found. There are 7 committee members; new members are always welcome.

Following many years of stable hiring fees, these have been increased to £7/hour for regular hirers, £10/hour + £5 for occasional users and £175 for weekend and bank holiday evening parties.

**Improvements since 2019** - Hall floor refurbished - Coved flooring in all toilets - Matting in the entrance lobby - New notice board and signs - External hand rails by the kitchen steps and main entrance - Daylight bulbs to rear and main entrance - Free wi fi for hall users - Automatic LED lighting in all toilets - Pendant lights replaced with LED pendants - Multicoloured light strip installed above the stage - All wall heaters on individual timers - Important electrical improvements

**Maintenance issues** - Blocked drains from the gents and disabled toilets, - New door closers in gents and disabled toilets - New external door handle and lock - Pointing on external walls - Kitchen corner requires work

**Finance** - During the Covid pandemic the hall was awarded several grants which ensured that it remained viable and has also provided the means to improve some aspects of the hall. The hall was recently successful in being awarded an energy efficient grant from County Councillor for the LED lighting

**Improvements in progress** - The shed is to be replaced by a more permanent larger structure - Anslow village hall is to be reformed as a CIO – charitable incorporated organisation, which limits liability of trustees to £1. - The hall and land is to be registered with the Land Registry

**Future** - The hall celebrates it’s70th anniversary in September, it is planned to have an open afternoon on Sunday 11th September

1. **Parishioners Open Forum**

Parishioner raised the issue of the traffic, highlighting the bend on Main Roa. It was explained that incredible speeds reached by people and signs are currently faded. Parishioner went on to explain that recently a van has been hit by speeding traffic coming round the corner and unfortunately incidents such as this are currently going unrecorded. Concern was raised that when the new estate opens it incur far more traffic exacerbating the problem. It was further explained what the speeding at its current rate near the school both the children and the lollipop lady are being put at risk daily.

Cllr Jeans went on to discuss that roughly £100k has been awarded to support a traffic calming system but issues such as the pandemic and inflation has slowed things down considerably and restricted what can currently be done. Cllr Jeans further explained that on 8th July a presentation will be made by Staffordshire County Council explaining what the traffic calming measures will be in which all parishioners will be invited to attend.

Cllr Jeans discussed the weight restriction order, which will be a trial for 6 months, that will stop lorries greater than 7.5 tonnes coming through the village with signage at every access to the village. This will hopefully have a visible impact and make difference to the village.

Parishioner raised the possibility of reducing the speed limit on Main Road as part of the traffic calming. Cllr Page explained that the upcoming project should make a difference to speeds reached but when this project is completed, we can continue to review.

Cllr Page and Cllr Jeans explained that we are currently looking at replacing the rotten fingerposts, looking at creating a metal sleeve that would fit over the pole to refix the pointers.

Cllr Greer raised the damage sign for the footpath. It was agreed for the clerk to report this using the MyStaffs App

Action; Clerk to contact Sandeep at Amey to arrange a site visit to the bend on Main Road.

Clerk to report damaged footpath sign

**Meeting closed at 20.11pm**

Date of Parish Council Meeting:

6.30pm on Monday 8th July 2022

Parish Council Information can be found on the internet at – www.anslowparishcouncil.org.uk