

Ashby St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 19th April at 7:30pm at Ashby and Thurton Village Hall

Minutes

Present: Robert Todd (Chairman), Terry Kitt, Mark Rolph, Carol Powell, Sarah King and Jayne Casey (Clerk)

Also present: Four members of the public

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Helen Yallop, Edgar Hoddy, and Revd. Chris Ellis. The police apologised that they can no longer attend meetings.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th April 2017

These had been circulated to all those attending the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting. The Chairman read out a report of the minutes, which were then approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's Report by Robert Todd

The Chairman thanked the members of the public that were present and then went on to extend his thanks to all the councillors for their continued support and work, in particular MR and TK for the extra time they have given during the period without a clerk as well as the other roles they undertake.

He went on to say that they had had a rather hard second half of the year, losing not only their clerk but a councillor as well, which resulted in cancelling a bi-monthly meeting. However things were declared on the turn when thanks were given to SK for stepping in as a new councillor and for JC becoming the new clerk, especially as she was local.

We have had slight problems accessing our bank account with the change around in clerks. The bank has now recognised JC as the new clerk, therefore we are now waiting for full access, which should be imminent.

TK has been working hard on our annual battle with potholes. The authorities have been contacted and should be responding momentarily. We are aware that with the snow they have been busy. We have had a better year for planning applications. The PC's comments have been taken into consideration, which was evidenced recently when we identified a surface water issue, which was subsequently written into the terms of said application.

Last year we had the potential for ultra fast broadband, a leaflet drop was undertaken however it did have a poor uptake. This is now in the hands of the council and BT, who are upgrading their boxes in the area, however we are unsure of the timescale.

The Chairman outlined his work on the village boundary issue, without which would have seen the Ashby and Thurton PCs merged. He was thankful for the strong response that was received from the local community meaning Ashby had been allowed to maintain its independence.

4. Finance

As we still have limited access to the bank account, the latest figures were reported as such. The parish council's previous end of year balance stood at £2852.13. With the parish precept of £2944.59 and the South Norfolk Council grant of £8 the total funding stands at £2952.69. The expenditure has been reduced this year to £1457.75 due to not having a clerk, however the figure does not include expenditure on the clerks salary from March to July 2017. The precept will never rise for the sake of it.

5. Parish Council Website

In his role as Webmaster, MR reported that he continues to update the website as soon as possible after new information for Ashby's parishioners becomes available. The last 12 months have given slight difficulties to this due to failures of out-of-date hardware coinciding with the enforced withdrawal of email addresses due to new data protection. In the coming months a new separate church page will be created owing to sufficient interest. Ashby was successful in applying for a grant that was offered to parish councils to procure equipment and software to assist in their website production. A new parish laptop was purchased which is being used to help with the Ashby Update Service and the Ashby Heating Oil Syndicate, both of which are free to join and leave; details can be obtained from the parish clerk. This year we have produced and printed the

APM notice to all parishioner's "in house" which has resulted in a worthwhile cost-saving. The full report can be found on the parish council website.

6. Neighbourhood Security and Ashby Update Service

MR reported that Neighbourhood security messages are issued to those who have asked to be included in the parish councils free Ashby Update Service. Within the last two months there were successful and unsuccessful attempts of thefts from vehicles in Chapel Lane and Chapel Road, information of which was circulated almost immediately to all parishioners on the Update Service. MR thanked residents for keeping a watchful lookout for incidents and reporting them to him so they can be circulated. He went on to report that the Update Service remains at 55 recipients this year, which is between one third and a half of all parish households, showing the community spirit we have in the village. The full report can be found on the parish council website.

7. Police report

A police report covering the Loddon, Brooke and Chedgrave area was circulated to councillors. The report shows very low crime numbers with one residential burglary reported, two possessions of a controlled substance, two thefts from motor vehicles and one theft from a person. However these are not specific to Ashby but cover the above areas.

8. Ashby Oil Syndicate

MR reported that the community-based syndicate has now been operating successfully by Ashby St Mary parish council for five years. It is a council-led initiative that provides a free service to its parishioners, which your council is pleased to report, continues to flourish.

MR appreciates those members who respond, as requested, with either a yes-thank you or a no-thank you when the offer of a bulk purchase is made, either response is valuable to know the message was received.

Despite world events meaning the barrel price of oil has not become any cheaper the syndicate has continued to make very useful savings for its parishioner members who have supported it. No oil company was favoured from those contacted while seeking the best deal. The year to April 2018 had seen five orders totalling 35,850 litres, down one order and 13,125 litres from the previous year. Last year the price per litre was between 29.50p to 42.90p. This year, due to world events and the harsher winter period, the price per litre ranged from 33.0p to 54.75p per litre. Savings of 4.73p per litre have been achieved, which equates to a £70 saving on a 1500 litre order.

Syndicate membership stands at 34, membership is free and more parishioners are welcome to join. A factsheet is available to request, more details can be obtained from the parish clerk. The full report can be found on the parish council website.

9. County Councillor's Report

No report has been received from Barry Stone.

10. District Councillor's Report

No report has been received from Jaan Larnier.

11. Ashby & Thurton Playing field Committee Report

CP Ashby & Thurton Village Hall Chairman reported that the management committee of the hall has a membership of 10. It was with sad regret that the last chairman Richard Taylor had passed away in July 2017.

The hall is used regularly by the pre-school and church youth groups along with other organisations on a private hire basis unfortunately the playing field is not being used by sporting groups. Grass cutting has cost £650 for the year but is hoped to be cut in the future. It was reported that the village hall is struggling financially and is short of funds for maintenance therefore it is possible that hire charges will be increased. The committee is grateful to Thurton Parish Council for their donation of £500. Thanks were extended to Chris Brown for carrying out essential maintenance works voluntarily.

A grant of £2,000 has been awarded from Tesco Bags of Help, which is being used to replace part of the kitchen. The 100 Club now has 100 members and pays out a prize of £35 a month with a super-draw of £120 in November. A Facebook page has been created to widen the scope of accessibility to the hall information and news. A July Inspection considered the Play Park to be of medium risk. Three fundraising events occurred in 2017, all of which were well organised and enjoyed by those in attendance. Members of the Village Hall Committee were thanked for their commitment.

In October local mothers with a plan of improving the park area created Ashby and Thurton Playground Project, under the umbrella of the Village Hall Management Committee. This group uses the Village Hall charity number and gift aid to access relevant grants. Laura Vaissiere and Jayne Casey came to a committee meeting to explain what money had been raised and how much was planned to be raised in the near future. Questionnaires have been delivered to all houses in Ashby St Mary, with Thurton currently being completed. It is hoped that installation will commence in the autumn. Full report attached.

12. Village Organisation Reports

Church – TK reported in Revd. Chris Ellis' absence that all was well. Unfortunately the Lottery Fund bid for maintenance work was unsuccessful, the PCC are currently considering whether a new submission is made. In the meantime it is proposed to carry out drainage works, extension of water supply and provision of a path to the rear of the church, which will allow a temporary toilet to be provided for users of the church. An estimated time for completion is unavailable. Fund raising events will be held during the coming years to boost church funds; details will be advertised in due course. Attendances remain consistent with the usual flourishes in special services, such as Christmas and Harvest. During the year it was reported the church saw one baptism, one wedding and three funerals.

Little Fish – Angie Broadberry reported that little fish was thriving with eight children currently in attendance. It is with sadness that Angie is stepping down from Little Fish. She will be greatly missed by all the parents and children. In November 2017 Jayne Casey agreed to become the new leader with the support of Laura Vaissiere. On 22nd November a Little Fish Big Toddle was organised to raise money for the Playground Project. Children from Little Fish, along with The Tiffin and Pre-school toddled all the way around the field and raised £640.

Thurton Holiday Club – Reported by Angie Broadberry. The August Holiday Club was very successful, with the village hall being transformed into a jungle for the week. Everyday 34 intrepid explorers aged between 5 and 11 joined together for songs, games, crafts, drama and puppets. A trip to Oasis Camel park was enjoyed by both children and their adults alike and the week culminated in a special Sunday Service for all the families and friends. Thanks was given to the 26 adult helpers along with Dave Cossey the youth worker who has now left to begin training for ordained ministry.

Thurton and Ashby Pre-school – JC read out a report in Sandra Rennie's absence. The pre-school has had another successful year and are continuing to provide exciting and stimulating environments for the children. A change of practitioners was implemented in September when Jane moved to pastures new. Gemma was welcomed onto the staff team and brings her experience in teaching and her love of the outdoors.

They currently have 20 registered children with eight leaving at the end of the school year and a waiting list of five starting in September. The Auto Jumble in May has been very successful again along with the Christmas bazaar, small events and a parent who has completed a sponsored run; thanks was extended to all those who help with fundraising. Under the pre-school umbrella Hayley started a Parent and Toddler group with the help of a small group of parents. There have been nine families attending regularly and it runs on alternate Wednesday in the village hall.

WI – Maintaining 35-36 members of various ages. They have reached the Ten-pin bowling semi-finals, which are soon to be played. Two darts teams have been set up with one team last year reaching the semi-finals. Sunday Afternoon games are held, mainly for those living on their own. There have been many interesting speakers and outings with the group running very well. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month.

13. Any Other business

A member of the public identified the broken grit bin on the corner of Mill Rd and Hall Rd. A letter has already been sent to the authorities to resolve this.

A member of the public praised the APM notice that was delivered to all households in Ashby St Mary.

Disappointment was shown regarding the lack of contact between the district and county councillors and the parish council. Both were invited to attend or send reports for this meeting, yet no response was received which mirrors the contact received throughout most of the year.

The meeting closed at 8.48 p.m.