

Draft Minutes of Lympsham Annual Parish Meeting, 21 May 2018

Present: Mr. J. Hinton (Chairman of Lympsham Parish Council), Cllrs. A. Bennett, B. Gooding, R. Hoare, R. Jones, J. Rosser & G. Tuttiett; County Cllr. R. Filmer, District Cllr. A. Gilling & ten residents.

Minutes were taken by the Clerk of Lympsham Parish Council

AO1/18 Apologies: None.

AO2/18 Minutes of previous Annual Meeting held on 15th May 2017: were confirmed and signed.
[Proposed: B. Gooding, seconded: G. Tuttiett – all agreed.]

AO3/18 Financial Report: The Clerk presented the Annual Accounts and circulated copies of the balance sheet; he explained that although the Precept was raised the previous year, costs still rose, but the Government Support Grant continued to be reduced. The Council wasn't able to access as many grants as in 2016/17 which was the year Cllr. Rosser, in particular, worked so hard to seek funding for the Play Area. However, 2017/18 was the year when many of the savings accrued for the Play Area and Community Shelter over ten years were spent. He also noted that the figures covered Lympsham News' costs of 5 quarters (one from the previous year), whilst some advert invoices were outstanding from the year.

Mr. G. Tuttiett proposed the acceptance of the accounts, seconded: Mrs. A. Bennett – carried.

AO4/18 Chairman's Report & Annual Review: At long last we have completed our Play Area Project and the long awaited Community Shelter, built by John Hopkins. The shelter was mooted by a resident several years ago and I am told that he is now very pleased with the result. The refurbishment of the Play Area has been driven by Councillor Julia Rosser, who has organised fund-raising for the project and designed the whole concept: my very grateful thanks to her for this.

LEBE's Community Café is still an extremely popular venue on Tuesdays and works well with our monthly surgeries, where residents can talk to the Parish Clerk and the local community Police about any aspects in the community. Unfortunately Lynne Booth has now retired, but Ros Dark has stepped in with a great team of volunteers. The Christmas Day meal was an enormous success providing a special occasion for those who would normally have been on their own.

The Sports Club has been through some turbulent times this year, but I am sure that under the chairmanship of James Counsell all will be resolved in the months ahead.

The Tennis Club has made the most of a grant that has enabled it to renew the playing surface and install new lights along with new fencing.

Our grounds maintenance is still carried out by Phil Collings: my thanks to him for all his hard work. We also have a team of 'guerrilla' gardeners and litter-pickers, who quietly keep our village 'up together': my thanks to them. It is interesting to note that fifteen residents collected 15 sacks of rubbish on a recent weekend: thanks to Mikhael for organising that.

Mikhael Comerford also continues to run our Post Office and Shop along with her band of volunteers: much appreciated. The Shop and its caring team has literally been an important lifeline for residents during the times of snow.

Speeding along the A370 and through our village is still of concern to the Parish Council and we are currently awaiting a highways engineer's report re proposed local speeding measures following an onsite meeting between representatives for Somerset Highways, the Police and the Parish Council which was organised by our County Councillor.

Marcus Hatton and his Speedwatch Team endeavour to remind drivers through Lympsham of the speed limits but, at times, it can be a thankless task: my thanks to him and his team.

The Lympsham News publication is still a very important aspect to our village and Malcolm Bennett has now created such a demand for space that he has had to increase the size of the magazine: my thanks to him.

Simon Lewis, our Vicar, has now moved on to pastures new, so The Parish of Three Saints will go through an interregnum before a new priest is installed.

After ten years the Parish Council is still actually addressing the issue of Affordable Housing in the village along with help from Sedgemoor District Council and its Housing team. It has always been, and will continue to be, a contentious subject, but the community at large still feels the need is there.

A few more 'thank yous' I would like to make go to:

Fiona Robertson, Head Teacher of Lympsham Academy and Pre-School, for all her help with the Parish Council and the Manor Hall Committee;

Gwen and Ron Hatton for all their help as Caretakers of the Manor Hall;

David Edworthy for inspecting the Parish Council accounts before submission to the external auditor;

Dave Prowton and his family for the Christmas lights raising funds for charity;

our County Councillor, Bob Filmer, and District Councillor Andrew Gilling, for their enormous support to this Parish Council;

our Parish Clerk, Robin Leveridge, (who will be retiring from his duties at the end of August) – my huge thanks for his help and guidance over the past years.

To my fellow Councillors, my thanks go to you all for your dedication and commitment to a task that is not always easy.

It is my intention after this meeting to step down as Chairman of the Parish Council; I shall continue as a Councillor, but after eleven years in the Chair, it is time for a change. It has been a privilege and an honour to serve as Chairman and I thank you all for listening to my voice over the years.

Lympsham village is thriving in so many ways and will continue to do so as long as there are spirited people in the community prepared to contribute to the parish in all its aspects.

N.B. At the subsequent meeting, John was persuaded to continue as Chairman of the Parish Council for a little longer

AO5/18 County Council Report: County Councillor R. Filmer mentioned various topics including the following: Education Dept. improvement following a poor OFSTED rating; 97.5% of children going to their 'chosen' schools; encouragement for foster homes; the need for authorities to work better together for residents; libraries consultation; 'Home First Scheme' whereby Musgrove Hospital has freed up 80 beds over the winter and the rolling out of superfast broadband;

AO6/18 District Council Report: County Councillor R. Filmer also covered District finance issues; useful feedback from peer review of authority; revenue issues; Government 'New House' target increase for SDC; major works at Hinkley and at motorway junctions.

AO7/18 Open Forum: No other matters were forthcoming. **The meeting ended at 7.59 p.m.**