

Minutes of Lympsham Annual Parish Meeting, 16 May 2016

Councillors Present: Mr. J. Hinton (Chairman), Mrs. A. Bennett, Mr. B. Gooding, Mr. R. Hoare, Mr. R. Jones, Mrs. J. Rosser & Mr. G. Tuttiett. Also in attendance: County Councillor J. Denbee, District Cllrs. R. Filmer & A. Gilling; Rev. S. Lewis, Mr. J. Hanmer & Mr. G. Searle (Presentation) plus seven residents.

Minutes were taken by the Clerk.

AO1/16 Apologies: None

AO2/16 Minutes of previous Annual Meeting held on 18th May 2015: were confirmed and signed.
[Proposed: B. Gooding, seconded: G. Tuttiett – all agreed.]

AO3/16 Financial Report: The Clerk presented the Annual Accounts and circulated copies of the balance sheet; he made comparisons with the previous year's, explaining a few positive differences e.g. improvement in Lympsham News income since new editor & reorganisation of advert system & more grants received for Play Area & Lympsham News. Less was spent on new equipment, but this anticipates Play Area refurbishment in 2016/17. The PC was able to offer a little extra to support local community initiatives, e.g. Pantomime. Dog bin servicing cost slightly more, but this covers an additional bin near Ferry Lane. Although the carry forward is approximately £5,500 in excess of previous year's, this is due to funds banked for the Play Area improvements. B. Gooding proposed the acceptance of the accounts, seconded: G. Tuttiett – carried.

AO4/16 Chairman's Report & Annual Review:

Our duties & commitments as a Parish Council don't seem to change from one year to the next, but we have had a few exceptions this year, with additional activities having been introduced into our village life.

Mention must be made about Keith Hart's honour of being awarded the British Empire Medal for his services to the community: a very well deserved honour which he receives this week in Taunton &, I understand, will be followed up by an invitation to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. We are all extremely proud of Keith & it certainly puts the village of Lympsham on the map.

Notable events during this calendar year include: the very successful Harvest Home which helps fund various items around the village; Her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations with a cream tea at the Pavilion & lighting of the beacon; the popular fetes held by the Church & the School along with the Lympsham Branch of the Royal British Legion Flower Show, where various prizes are awarded especially the Men's rock cakes category; the newly formed 'Lympsham Incredible Pantomime Society' performed some memorable shows and last, but not least, the 'Party for Our Park' held at the Batch Hotel organised by Cllr. Julia Rosser, ably assisted by our newest Councillor, Aline Bennett: this outstanding event has raised over £1,100 for the Play Area.

Then there was the brilliant introduction of LEBE's Community Café last November, opening every Tuesday & now includes the monthly Police & Parish Council surgeries. This successful venture has already donated funds to the Church, local schools & for the restoration of our historic fingerpost.

Our financial commitments have enabled the Parish Council to keep the Precept the same for the last four years & my thanks go to David Edworthy for continuing to audit the accounts before submission to the Audit Commission.

We are committed to safeguarding the village of Lympsham & Eastertown for future generations &, to that end, realise the need for affordable housing which we embarked on nearly ten years ago. Whilst the majority of parishioners appreciate the need for this project, when & where is still under discussion & identifiable sites are now in the public domain.

Rev. Simon Lewis & the Parochial Church Council are currently looking at transforming The Parish of Three Saints in order to provide a place 'of spiritual growth, hospitality & care for the neighbourhood.' Simon's presentation 'Re-Pitching Our Tent' will follow this evening, when he will give us an insight of the Church's vision for the future.

We now have Malcolm Bennett editing the Lympsham News in a new format & presentation which is very exciting and my grateful thanks to him for taking on this very important commitment.

Other notable thanks must also go to: Fiona Robertson, Head of Lympsham First School; Ron & Gwen Hatton for the Manor Hall; Mikhael Comerford, Jim Hanmer & all the volunteers at the Village Shop & Post Office; Marcus Hatton & his team re Speedwatch; Phil Collings for grounds maintenance; Kasia at the Pavilion, and Dave Prowton & Family for the charity Christmas lights.

We continue to hold both Sedgemoor District Council & Somerset County Council to account for their part in the smooth running of our village, but sometimes getting responses from the Drainage Board & Highways Department are quite a challenge for the Parish Clerk.

The Lympsham website provides numerous photographs & diary dates for events through the year & people can contribute information through the Parish Clerk.

So now my thanks to all those who make this vibrant community thrive: a special thank you to Robin Leveridge, our Parish Clerk, for all his hard work & assistance; to Andrew Gilling & Bob Filmer, our District Councillors, for their guidance & support; and to all my fellow Parish Councillors for all their hard work behind the scenes throughout the year.

Ladies & Gentlemen, we have a wonderful community in a picturesque environment with superb facilities: long may it continue.

AO5/16 County Council Report: County Councillor Denbee introduced his role in a 'huge, rural area' & was mindful of local concerns including the new local district plans & affordable housing. He mentioned our local MP's efforts in improving broadband, problems of potholes, Somerset Council's historic debt & the responsibility for caring for the elderly & adult welfare – he recommended everyone to 'stay healthy'; he sadly noted that there are over four hundred children in the care of the county. He also expressed concerns re reduced Police presence, but highlighted good reports of local education facilities. Cllr. Denbee thanked the Parish Council for its work.

In answer to a question from the floor re a replacement for Webber buses, Cllr. Denbee hoped that other companies would fill the gap.

AO6/16 'Re-Pitching Our Tent': Presentation by Rev. S. Lewis, J. Hanmer & G. Searle; following this, Rev. Lewis answered various queries. N.B. A copy of the presentation & further information can be found by following the links on the website:
<http://www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk/>

AO7/16 Open Forum: No other matters were forthcoming.

The meeting ended at 8.42 p.m.