

## **MESHAW PARISH MEETING**

Minutes of the Parish Meeting AGM held via a Zoom Meeting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 7.30 pm.

### **PRESENT**

Jeff Souch (Chairman), Jill Souch, Andrew Walton, Heather Walton, Brendan Shaw, Mary Tait and Amantha King.

### **APOLOGIES**

Angus Cottey, Joy Cottey. Due to technical issues we could not connect via Zoom to Sarah Vertigan (Parish Clerk), Liz Smith, Tim Smith, Roger Creed and Trevor Olver.

The Chairman explained at the start of the meeting that due to Covid-19 Regulations the Parish Meeting had not been able to hold the Annual General Meeting as required by early in July, Local Government advised Parish Meetings could operate by virtual meetings and thus will attempt to hold the AGM by Zoom.

#### **1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2019**

The minutes from this meeting had been previously circulated to those who indicated they would wish to join the Zoom Meeting. It was agreed by those presiding at the meeting that they represented a true record of that meeting. Proposed by Andrew Walton and seconded by Brendan Shaw. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

#### **2. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN**

This meeting postponed due to the Covid-19 restrictions is convened primarily so our Parish Meeting can conform to Local Government Reporting Regulations regarding financial accounting and given a recent relaxation in regulations Parish Meetings can now operate virtually as Full Parish Councils have been for several months.

There have been two Parish Meetings during 2019/20. The Annual General Meeting in April last year and the Budget Setting Meeting in November 2019.

For the year in question we organised the successful Pig Roast that raised funds for the Village - £312.60. Thank you to all involved. The weather was kind to us and it is a shame that during this summer we were not able to have another meeting given Covid-19 restrictions which resulted in our Produce Show being cancelled.

At Christmas 2019 we were able to hold our annual Carol Service in the Square and have refreshments afterwards courtesy of Celia Larner who also provides the electric supply for the Tree Lights in the Square.

Meshaw Parish have two Snow wardens who distribute rock salt/grit where required in addition to the Devon Highways management of the B3137. Grit bins are reviewed and topped up and there is a good stock of 25kg grit bags within the Parish. I would like to acknowledge the help from Angus Cottey as the Snow warden who covers the immediate Village area.

Thank you to Brendan Shaw our Website Master. He continues to put a lot of work into making it a very informative and useful site.

Neighbourhood Watch continues to be organised in the Village by Roger Creed and he supplies the Website with updates when and if information needs to be passed on. Kevin Steele assists looking after the outer area. Thank you Roger and Kevin for your help with this.

At our Budget setting meeting in November it was resolved that as a Parish we would wish to give further help to the Parochial Church Council appointed to administer St John the Baptist in respect of Churchyard maintenance. This resulted in a slight increase in the Parish Rate but it was felt that as the Church yard is still open for burials and at the Heart of the Village and the subject of the Meshaw Together Project it was worthwhile to help with the upkeep that had been causing concern for several years. I will briefly mention the Village Hub Project under item 7 of the Agenda.

Covid-19 has caused major upsets everywhere but Meshaw as a Village has pulled together and whilst strictly speaking Lockdown was mostly in our 2020/21 year I think it appropriate to say thank you now for all of the neighbourly acts of help and kindness shown to make life as bearable as possible for those self- isolating or taking extra precautions. The help site set up at the beginning of the Pandemic has worked well and I think as a result no one in Meshaw really suffered unduly.

An interesting development during Lockdown was the Village Allotment organised by Celia Larner.

I understand it has worked well this season and trust it will continue to be a Village resource as we move forward.

Finally, my thanks to Sarah Vertigan our Parish Clerk for her help and to Mr Robert Nicholls our Internal Auditor.

No one raised any matters from the Chairman's Report.

### **3. REVIEW OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE POLICY**

The Chairman explained that a review took place of the way the Parish Meeting operated and this was covered by an Annual Governance Statement,

- i) It covered the arrangements for effective financial management during the year and the preparation of accounting statements.
- ii) It covers the provision of an adequate system of financial controls to protect against fraud and corruption.

- iii) It looks at the potential issues relating to non-compliance of laws, regulations and proper practices and the ability of the Parish Meeting to manage the business.
- iv) It looks at the opportunity during the year for the exercising of Public Rights to view the Financial Records in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- v) We have to confirm that an assessment of the risks facing the Parish Meeting and that appropriate steps to manage the risks have been taken.
- vi) We have to confirm throughout the year that an adequate and effective system of audit.
- vii) Confirm we take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from Internal and External Audit.
- viii) Confirm we have taken into account whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions might have a financial impact on the Parish Meeting.

The Chairman stated that he was happy to confirm all of these requirements had been met.

#### **4. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 2019/20**

Prior to this meeting copies of the accounts that had been audited by Mr R Nicholls our Internal Auditor had been distributed.

There were no questions and the Chairman asked for a proposer and seconder to give approval for formally adopting them. Proposed by Heather Walton and seconded by Mary Tait.

#### **5. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR 2020/21**

There were no new candidates and the existing Chairman Jeff Souch indicated a willingness to continue for another year.

This motion was proposed by Andrew Walton and seconded by Brendan Shaw.

#### **6. TO AUTHORISE CERTAIN EXPENDITURE IN THE 2020/21 BUDGET**

There were at this time no amendments proposed to the Budget agreed on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

#### **7. UPDATE ON THE ST JOHN THE BAPTIST COMMUNITY HUB PROJECT**

The Chairman advised that the Project was continuing but Covid-19 had slowed matters down.

The Committee were waiting for updated plans from the architect before putting together an application to the Diocese Advisory Committee detailing Village and Parochial Church Council requirements.

The amended plans had been received today and work would now commence on the application subject to some further information sought from the appointed architect.

The Chairman advised he had accepted the role of the Project Manager and that he would be seeking to involve other villagers that had shown an interest in the project.

Further update to follow.

#### **8. RECEIVE REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS**

No reports were made.

#### **9. IDEAS FOR A SUITABLE PARISH EVENT**

Although not present at the meeting it was proposed by Sally and Andrew Meikle that they hold a Harvest Supper in a barn at Great Whitstone. Those present at the meeting agreed it was a good idea subject to the event meeting Covid-19 restrictions. Timing flexible.

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Parish Clerk had advised the Chairman prior to the meeting that Amantha King had wished to discuss the provision of a Defibrillator for the Parish.

This matter had been raised before and some work had been carried out but at this stage no recommendations had been received.

Amantha offered to research Defibrillators and put the various options with costs of setting up and ongoing costs before the next village meeting, so the proposal could be agreed upon, Amantha was thanked by the Chairman and it was agreed she speak with Joy Cottey to share her findings so far.

The next item raised by Mary Tait related to the provision of Thermometer and Pulse Oximeter for village use as it might be useful in the event of a second wave of Covid-19 infection.

The Chairman was not aware of this proposal given a communication issue with the Parish Clerk but he advised he would look into the matter and whether the village could use a small part of the Covid Grant to pay for it.

Time being very short in the Zoom Meeting the Chairman thanked all of those who attended and closed the meeting at 8.10 pm.