

MESHAW PARISH MEETING

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2 JUNE 2021 AT 7.00PM AT ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, MESHAW, EX36 4NE

Present: Jeff Souch (Chairman) and Sarah Vertigan (Parish Clerk)

In Attendance: Angus Cottey, Joy Cottey, Roger Creed, Celia Lerner, Trevor Olver, Lyn Rains, Diana Robinson, Tim Smith, James Vertigan, Richard Woodrow

Apologies: Amantha King, Sally Meikle, Brendan Shaw, Jill Souch, Mary Tait, Heather Walton, Andrew Walton

1. Minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 24 November 2020

- The minutes, having been circulated to all those present by email prior to the meeting, were deemed to be an accurate and true account of the previous meeting. Since no one had any comments, they were duly approved, proposed by Trevor Olver and seconded by Angus Cottey.
- The Chairman signed off on the minutes during the meeting.

2. Chairman's Report

- The Chairman reported that due to the Covid restrictions, the Pig Roast and newly formed Garden/Flower Show had been cancelled in 2020.
- However it had been possible to put up the Christmas tree in the square although there was no carol singing around the tree.
- The village hub had moved on and he would elaborate on that later in the meeting.
- It had been agreed to increase the Parish rate to allow for a larger contribution to be made to the upkeep of the churchyard and he had to admit that it had really looked beautiful last year due to the extra upkeep. He suggested that it could possibly be entered into the best kept churchyard competition another year.
- He wanted to thank the Covid 'help' team for the voluntary acts of kindness during lockdown and also other villagers who had also helped their neighbours.
- He felt that everyone was waiting for the announcements on 21 June before committing to 'business as usual'.
- He explained that the main reason for the AGM was to approve the finances for the year.

3. Audit Commission on the accounts for 2020/21

- The Chairman reported that the accounts had been finalised and audited by an ex-bank manager who had verified they were correct and in order.
- The Chairman explained that there were measures in place to prevent fraud by having two signatories on all payments.
- It was the Chairman's responsibility to take reasonable steps to comply with the rules and regulations and to keep an eye on any potential liabilities that could impact upon the finances and also to consider health and safety at public events.
- It was his responsibility to facilitate the electors' rights to ask for sight of the accounts and a notice is posted annually on the village noticeboards informing the electorate of their rights to see the Parish Meeting Annual accounts. This notice is also put onto the Village Website.

- Since the annual turnover for Meshaw is under £25k the Chairman is able to sign off the accounts by Certificate of Exemption in accordance with Local Government Annual Governance and Accountability rules 2020/21.

4. To approve the Accounts for the Year 2020/21

- The Chairman presented the final audited accounts to all those present.
- He briefly ran through the amounts and also explained the purpose of the notes at the bottom of the page which related to items which were ring-fenced for specific projects, such as the Feasibility Study and the Social Fund.
- He asked if anyone had any questions regarding the accounts.

Angus Cottey raised two points regarding the accounts:

- He felt that the amount of £495, which was a loan from the NDDC to cover Covid-related expenses, should be put in brackets in that it was not really income and would need to be accounted for in due course, with the balance being returned to the Council.
- Secondly, he was surprised that the Meeting was not using a bank account that paid interest and he felt it should be explored.
- The Chairman agreed to research an interest bearing account given that the level of credit monies held was far greater than had been envisaged previously. He did advise that opening new bank accounts was particularly complicated these days, although he would see if HSBC had a better account that the monies could be moved to before looking elsewhere.

Trevor Olver asked if the Chairman could explain what the Feasibility Expenses were:

- The Chairman replied that a figure of £414.40 had been paid to Rowena Riley, the church historian, who had prepared a Heritage Report as part of the re-ordering process, highlighting any particular historical artefacts within the church.
- The Chairman asked who would like to propose that the accounts be approved.
- Trevor Olver proposed and Angus Cottey seconded the proposal.

5. Election of Chairman for the forthcoming year 2021/22

- The Parish Clerk asked if anyone present would like to put themselves forward for the position of Chairman of the Parish Meeting. Since no one put their name forward, Jeff Souch agreed to continue in the role for a further term.
- Roger Creed proposed that Jeff Souch be elected as Chairman and Tim Smith seconded the proposal.
- Jeff Souch was duly elected to be Chairman for a further term.

6. To Authorise expenditure envisaged in the 2021/22 Budget

- The Chairman reported that at the previous meeting (Budget meeting) in November, it had been agreed to increase the support given to the PCC for churchyard maintenance by a further £150 making a total of £750 per annum. The PCC had in fact spent £1300 on the upkeep of the churchyard in the last year, so it had been agreed to pay them £750 towards this.
- The annual precept to be received from the NDDC is now £1040 to cover the Parish Meeting commitments, the increase of which has an impact on each household by approximately £4 - 8 per annum.

- Trevor Olver proposed that the Budget be approved and Roger Creed seconded the proposal.

7. Update on St John the Baptist Church Community Hub proposal

- The Chairman reported that the proposed Community Hub was continuing to progress and currently the only sticking point was the type of heating to be installed. In an attempt to keep the system as 'green' as possible, various systems had been discussed, including air source heating, but nothing has yet been agreed.
- Further delays had been encountered in trying to get various contractors to visit site during the lockdowns.
- However, he had received quotes for projection facilities, screen, audio and loop system.
- Once all the information is received, it will be up to the Diocese in Exeter to approve the proposal.
- Roger Creed wondered if it could be put up on the website but the Chairman felt it was too soon to be announcing anything in case it was all turned down.

8. Neighbourhood Watch report

- Roger Creed reported that there had been nothing specific to report in his part of the village apart from warning people about telephone and computer scams.
- The Chairman agreed to contact Kevin Steele regarding the other half of the village.

9. Defibrillator Update

- The Chairman reported that we had received the grant of £1920 which was ring-fenced for the lease of the defibrillator.
- The proposal is that South West Ambulance would supply and maintain the appliance for 4 years as well as providing training for up to 24 people on how to use it.
- Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions, South West Ambulance have put installation and training of defibrillators on hold but our order is in the system and SWA are to contact him again to let him know if and when they are commencing installation and training again.

10. Update on Pig Roast

- Sarah Vertigan reported that she had met with Sally Meikle, who has agreed to remain as Social Secretary, to discuss possible dates. After consultation with the Chairman, availability of Oxham Hall and the butcher for the hire of the pig roasting machine, it had been agreed that the best available date was Saturday 31 July and both the pig roast and hall had been booked.
- SV has already sent out 'save the date' emails to those whose email addresses she has and also posted notices on the noticeboards in the Square and on the Moor.
- Sally Meikle would like to arrange a meeting with a small group of volunteers as soon as possible to discuss the plans further.
- It is proposed that the evening will generally follow the format that has proved successful in the past but SV asked if anyone had any new suggestions, they would be gratefully received.
- SV also asked if anyone had any suitable raffle prizes. Lyn Rains very kindly said she had some items which she would be happy to donate. The Parish Clerk thanked her.

11. Any Other Business

Queens Platinum Jubilee

- SV raised the subject of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee which will run from Thursday 2 June until Sunday 5 June 2022. She accepted it was a year away but felt it would be good idea to start thinking about what the Parishioners of Meshaw would like to do to celebrate the event and therefore we should invite suggestions as soon as possible.
- Diana Robinson kindly agreed that if we needed a covered area, she could make her barn available for the occasion.

Terracycle recycle scheme for the village

- It was agreed that this item should be deferred until the next meeting since Amantha King who has proposed it was unable to attend this meeting and it was felt that she was the best person to put across the benefits of having this system to the Parishioners.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.00pm.